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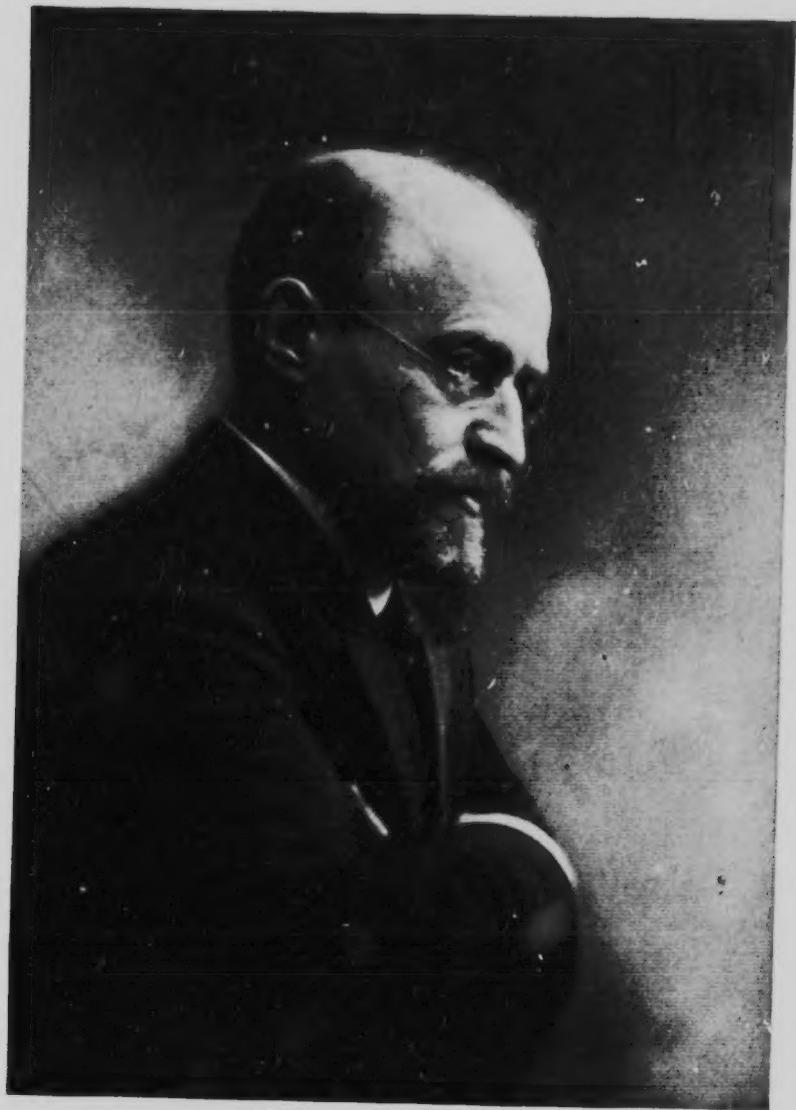
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*THE STORY OF MY
LIFE IN AMERICA*

EDWARD A. STEINER
Professor in Grinnell College, Iowa

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH



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TO

My Beloved Children

Gretchen Henrietta

Henry York (whom God called home)

Richard Morrow

I dedicate this Book

in the hope that those remaining
will help repay the debt I
owe to my adopted country



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PREFACE

SOME TIME ago, I met a distinguished visitor to this country—His Excellency the Minister of Public Instruction of Hungary, and had the pleasure of being his *Cicerone* when he visited the schools and settlements of Chicago.

Passing through the business section of that city, he saw its sky-scrappers, erected without rhyme or reason, and his ears were assaulted by the thunderous noise of the elevated railroad. As his eyes involuntarily focussed upon the headlines of a newspaper which some one was reading about a block ahead, he said something in his native language, which, when mildly translated, means: *beastly vulgar*.

His polite reserve once broken, he let loose a tirade against the United States in general, and Chicago in particular. He asked me to compare the city of Buda-Pesth with its harmonious and distinctive architecture, its centres of civic beauty, its magnificent and ceaselessly busy river banks, spanned by monumental bridges,—with Chicago's congested mass of heterogeneous, inharmonious

buildings, its muddy river's untidy, sooty shores, and its antiquated, dilapidated bridges.

A polite silence is all one can allow oneself in the presence of one's foreign guest, especially if he happens to be "His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction."

We crossed the Chicago River and walked through miles of monotonous, dirty streets; we struggled through crowds of unpicturesque foreigners, gathered from all parts of the earth, and the sights and sounds and smells which "His Excellency" had to endure were not calculated to change his first impression.

After we had visited a number of the public schools, however, his attitude of mind seemed less antagonistic; although while listening to a debate on "The Initiative and The Referendum" in one of the graded schools, he declared that those children were being trained to be revolutionists. He further confided to me that in his country, such a school would be razed to the ground, and the teachers who encouraged such a discussion sent to prison.

In the evening we visited the settlements. He was greatly interested in the friendly, free service rendered to the unfortunate, and was fascinated by the bright and efficient women whom he met. In one settlement he was attracted by a basket-

ball game which was being played in the gymnasium. He marvelled at the swiftness of the game, the perfect poses of the contestants, their sure aim, and the good-natured banter between the audience and the players.

When it was all over he forgot for a moment his offended good taste, and astonished me greatly, but himself more, by involuntarily joining in the cheering.

Then he said: "Of course these young men are native Americans."

With perfect assurance I replied: "There is not an American among them. The losing team is made up of Slavs from the Stock Yards district, and the winners are Jews from the neighbourhood of 12th and Halstead streets."

He shook his head, doubting my statement; so, to prove my assertion, I called one of the players and asked him his name. He gave it to me in its Anglicized form, with a great many letters missing.

"Where were you born?" I asked him.

"In the Old Country, of course."

"What country?"

"Hungary."

"Now, my boy," I said, "I want you to meet His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction of your own country!"

With perfect democratic dignity, the boy shook "His Excellency's" reluctant hand, saying heartily: "I am glad to meet you, Minister; how do you like Chicago?"

It took "His Excellency" some minutes to recover from the shock. Then he said to me in tragic tones: "It is impossible! This boy belongs to the lowest of our subject races. We have ruled them for nine hundred years, but have not really conquered them. We have forced our language upon them and they have refused to speak it; we have forbidden the use of their mother tongue in the higher schools, yet they never forget it, and with each year, they become more and more Slavonic. You take our refuse, our lowest classes, and in a generation you make Americans of them! How do you do it?"

"Ah! your Excellency," I replied, with a smile; "that is our *Art*, and in it, we are not quite so '*beastly vulgar!*'"

How do we do it? Perhaps the question would be better put by asking: How does it happen? Much of the process is planless, involuntary, even automatic, a natural result of this New World environment. I have been fortunate, not only in watching the process and trying to analyse the forces at work, but in being myself a product of it. As such, this record of my life in America

may be of value; for in part, at least, it answers "His Excellency's" question.

My story differs from others in that I came here somewhat past the most formative period of life, that the changes which have taken place within me are most radical, and practically all the forces which are at work, both for good and evil, became operative in my case. The sweat shop, the mills and mines with their grinding labour, the lower courts, the jail, the open road with its dangers, the American home, and the Christian Church. If mine were an unusual case this record would not be worth the making. I am but a type, exceptional only, as my individuality differs from that of others. I may have had more resistance towards some of these forces, and been more easily influenced by others.

On the whole, that which happened to me has happened—is happening—to others; and while the results may not be as advantageous to many, the changes wrought have been quite as momentous.

Wherever the newer immigrant has gone, I have been pleading that he may get that fair chance, that contact with the vital forces of our New World civilization, which proved so efficacious in my own case. I have spoken from thousands of platforms, and in nearly every place, some individual, whose history was identical with

my own, has come to my attention; some one who, like myself, had felt the pangs of this new birth, and who, with me, gloried and joyed in the new life.

I am bound to hundreds of such individuals, who represent most of the non-Teutonic races and nationalities, and who, by virtue of the fact that we were born out of the same womb, with the same pangs and pains, have become brothers and sisters, united in a passionate love for our new mother country.

I have been more fortunate than most of them, in being able to tell the story of this new birth, a story which can not be told too frequently.

There are millions who have never been able to press through the throng, and touch the hem of some healing garment; millions who are brutalized by hard labour and starved for want of that sympathy which fed, and nourished, and developed me. There are countless ones who live and die, without knowing that America is not a step-mother, who grudges us our wage and cares only for our brute strength.

This making a record of one's life is not an easy or a pleasant task. I have always shrunk from it, especially as it required the laying bare of my soul, and the analysis of those forces which touched my religious life.

PREFACE

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This book was not written to increase prejudice, but rather to allay it; it is not a call to a new propaganda but to a new spirit.

If it stimulates that faith in humanity which is the finest inheritance of the American people; if my readers learn to see in the alien the potential fellow citizen, and treat him as such; if in any degree, I have answered "His Excellency's" question as to "How we do it"; more especially, if this record teaches some one *How not to do it*, I shall rejoice to have written this book; even though the writing involved great struggle and stress.

GRINNELL, IOWA.

E. A. S.



I

PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT

IT seems so long ago that I might almost say: "Once upon a time"—an Italian came to our town with a grind-organ, a monkey, and a parrot. The grind-organ and the monkey performed for rich and poor alike, but only the lucky owner of a certain number of *kreutzers* could arouse the parrot, which, with eyes shut, sat upon his perch while the organ played and the monkey performed. No doubt the parrot was trying to forget this wretched company, and was dreaming of the far-off paradise which once was his.

Now *kreutzers*, the small coin of our realm, were rather rare in the pockets of little boys. Inasmuch as the parrot was announced to be a celebrated fortune-teller I wanted to prove him; so I teased my dear mother just long enough to get the coveted number of coins.

With an air of great importance I pushed through the crowd which encircled the Italian, and the eyes of the multitude were upon me. At least I thought they were, although in reality they were fixed on the parrot; for there had been long dispute

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as to whether he was alive or not. His master took my money and struck the perch upon which the bird sat immovable, with eyes shut. Quiz-zically it cocked its head, looked at the promised reward in the hand of its trainer, then majestically descended, drew an envelope out of a row, which no doubt held the fate of all youths of my age, and dropped it upon the little table. Thus my fortune was told, and my fate sealed.

The crowd urged me to open it, but I ran home as fast as I could, reading as I ran. Even before the house was reached I cried out breathlessly: "Mother, I am going to America, and I am going to marry a rich wife."

"I told you," said the dear mother, with a smile which concealed a tear, "you would waste your money. You will stay at home with your widowed mother and be her solace in her old age."

Then she took me out into the garden under the big pear tree, and showed me the boundaries of our small estate: the poppy field, the cabbage patch, the prune trees—all the land from the *pottock*, the creek, to the edge of the dusty highway.

"This," she said, "will be yours, my son, and you will get a good, pious wife right here, rather than to go among the Indians and marry a wild woman."

In spite of the allurements offered, my imagina-



MY MOTHER



tion was fired by the parrot's prophecy, and that evening I sought out my teacher and asked him how to go to America.

"It is so far, my boy," he said, "that you will never reach there. It is one day by the omnibus, four days and nights by the railroad, and then across the *yam*—the great sea—for fourteen days.

"A ship," he continued, "does not go like the omnibus, but like a nutshell on the *pottock*, and you may at any moment be spilled over and eaten by the fish."

Then he took me by my shock of curly hair and shook me, saying:

"The fish in the great *yam* are especially fond of curly-headed boys; so you run home and learn your multiplication table and don't forget that seven times nine are sixty-three."

Seven times nine was my stumbling block. I went home, not to study my multiplication table, but to dream about the parrot and America and the rich young lady waiting for me beyond the great *yam*. I was fully determined to go there, even at the risk of being spilled and eaten by the fish.

Before I was seven years of age I saw a man who had been across that dreadful water. He came crawling out of the omnibus, only three-quarters of a man, returning from a land where,

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after fighting in many a battle, he had left an arm and a leg to mingle with the dust of that far-off country.

He brought with him a thirst for liquor, some strange oaths and love and veneration for a man whom he called Father Abraham. He left me that man's picture when he died, and it strengthened my desire to go to the land where a man whose name was Abraham could span the gulf between a log cabin and the White House.

One day when the rabbi was expounding doctrine, I gathered the boys in the synagogue yard and tried to incite them to a conspiracy against the cruel government, which exacted heavy taxes from the peasants. I wanted to do what Father Abraham had done—emancipate the poor wretches. The watchful beadle, however, came tiptoeing behind the truant lads, saved the Austro-Hungarian Government from overthrow and gave me such a whack over my left ear that it still sings from pain and pleasure as I recall the incident. I was led ignominiously back into the synagogue, just in time to hear the rabbi turn an intellectual somersault upon the dot of a letter which seemed to him of tremendous importance.

Again the parrot's prophecy seemed to be nearing fulfilment when a whole family came back to our town, having crossed the big *yam* without

PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT 23

being spilled and eaten by the fish. I fell desperately in love with the daughter, three years my senior. The father's health had in some way suffered from his police record in an Illinois city and he and his family were going back recuperated, when the tide of politics turned in his favour.

When they left for America I clung to the omnibus which carried them away, my love making me fearless of ocean and fish, but I was sent back shortly after the omnibus had passed the toll-gate. Of course I was heartbroken, and my tears were very hot. My older brother soothed my pain by applying his hand in punishment.

I ran away once more, that time with a half-witted boy, and had gone as far as the railroad when the same brother overtook me and brought me home, repentant, half-starved and homesick, for I had been thrown into jail with gipsies, thieves and vagabonds.

So far my efforts to assist in bringing to pass the parrot's prophecy were of no avail, but long, long after this, my boyhood outgrown, a part of it was to be fulfilled.

One day when I was at home during the Pentecostal vacation after a severe examination period, a copyist from the judge's office came to my mother and told her that for a certain sum he

would reveal to her an official secret, which would save me from falling into the hands of the vengeful government. Lest my readers think that I had been guilty of something very base, I shall here reveal the secret which he was ready to sell.

In the part of the world where I lived there were, as everywhere, the rulers and the ruled, the oppressors and the oppressed; viz., the Magyars and the Slovaks. The Slovaks are a branch of the Czecho-Slavic group of the Slav family and live in the crescent-shaped Carpathians. Toward the East they merge into the Polish and toward the North into the Czechish groups. They have never been strong enough to gain national independence, although once there was a Slovak Kingdom and they cherish the memory of a great king whose name was Svatopluk. The warlike Huns easily subjugated these agricultural Slavs and they remained an unawakened, half stupid, servile race. For that very reason I made their cause my own. My natural feeling for the oppressed was intensified by the fact that in spite of their many faults they were a lovable people. I grew up among them, playing my first games with Slovak boys; they taught me the mysteries of fashioning willow twigs into whistles and how to wind *Corbatshy*, whips, that were used during Easter week to commemorate the scourging of the Lord. I spent

THE SYNAGOGUE



THE MARKET-PLACE





PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT 25

many glorious hours in their dirty *isbas*, listening to folk tales, and I knew their language before I knew any other.

Perhaps the fact that I had a Slovak nurse and that I was vaccinated with virus taken from the arm of a Slovak boy, whom I called my brother by vaccination, made me feel kin to these Gentiles. I also had various boyhood love affairs among the Slovak girls and was especially devoted to the miller's daughter, whose pathetic death impressed me very much and made me feel my oneness with those people in their suffering.

My first holy office in any church was performed when I helped the Slovak boys ring the church bells. From their respective bell towers I heard the solemn Lutheran songs and saw the holy mass performed by Roman Catholic priests.

I also saw these Slovaks flogged in the courtyard, clapped into prison for slight offences, and their wives and daughters insulted by Magyar officials.

I sensed their wrongs in my childhood and felt them keenly as I grew into manhood, especially after I came in touch with the revolutionary literature of that period. I think that most boys pass through some such heroic stage where the thought of martyrdom seems like wine in their blood. I

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was at that age and committed many a senseless indiscretion.

I am fairly sure I was liable to a reprimand or a slight punishment, and that the shrewd copyist played on the fears of a Jewish mother who loved her boy and feared the law. Before I knew it I was on my way to America, the copyist promising to hold the secret till I should be safe across the border.

This is as near as I ever came to becoming a political offender, and no doubt the Hungarian Government has forgotten the episode.

Within three days of my leaving home I was on the big *yam*, the ship *did* act like a nutshell on the *pottock* and the law of gravitation seemed to have ceased functioning so far as my digestive organs were concerned. I wished many a time that I had left the parrot dreaming on his perch instead of waking him to prophesy for me so awful a fate.

II

THE COMPARATIVE STEERAGE

WHEN one makes haste to be gone, the regrets and the homesickness are deferred; so it was not until the well-known countries and cities through which I passed revived memories, bitter and sweet, that I realized I was leaving all I held dear.

For a score of years and more I have frequently travelled this same route, each time with new experiences and new emotions; yet no sensations quite equal those I felt when a fugitive, severing myself from home, from my past and from my people.

I recalled my first trip on a railroad when I was four years of age. The torturing ride in the omnibus across the low hills of the Carpathians; the long wait at the inn where horses were changed, the journey through the thick forest, across the border into Austria, where we took the mixed train to Vienna.

I recall distinctly that I hid under the seat, frightened by the noises, that the telegraph poles travelled mysteriously past us, and that the conductor punched our tickets with a contrivance

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which looked like the snuffers we used on our tallow candles.

How terrible the Danube looked to me at the tender age of four—and the bridge with its curves which seemed to swallow one another as we passed over it; the brilliant lights of the city, the first sight of the great cathedral; all this and many other wanderings I recalled. How in later years I travelled along the shores of the Danube, dreaming the great dreams of youth; again crossing it, going into the bleak East to sit at the feet of a prophet, who was to reveal to me the meaning of life, and whom I had followed but afar off.

Then Germany, my intellectual fatherland, was, and still is, full of memories, for I crossed the empire afoot, from Dresden to Kiel and from Strassburg to Breslau. Along the Rhine I had gone afoot and awheel, hungry and cold sometimes, yet revelling in its beauty.

By the Neckar from my beloved university, with a book in one pocket, a modest luncheon in the other, and in my heart the wealth with which the good God has dowered me—the power of appreciation.

Many a time then and since have I thanked God for this one boon which made the hills and the castles, the sky, the storied past and the power of the throbbing present, all my own . . . although I

IMMIGRANTS TAKING THE TRAIN





THE COMPARATIVE STEERAGE 29

owned not a foot of land and was a stranger, penniless often and without a shelter.

I have travelled since in trains *de luxe* and have slept in fine hostellries where liveried flunkies do one's bidding, yet I shall never forget a night in the Hartz mountains when, my modest allowance almost gone, I slept in the forest, where the keeper's dogs found me. I stayed in the forester's house one beautiful day, the guest of the rough but kindly man, who appreciated my search for the wealth of the good Lord and led me through His forest cathedrals.

On all these journeys, so many that I cannot count them, I have come in touch with the heart of humanity and found it good. Neither Schopenhauer nor Nietzsche, nor my Calvinistic theology, nor the rebuffs of later days, nor bitter sorrow, nor deep suffering have weaned me from this conviction, begotten of experience.

Often in these later days when I have preached the one message I have—the inner kinship of the human—when I have declared my faith in brotherhood and when that faith was challenged, I recalled those good folk on the Volga and the Dnyper, on the Danube, the Rhine and the Neckar, and later on the Hudson, the Ohio and the Mississippi. In humblest huts and in earth caves they lived; they who never did me evil, but always

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pointed the way, shared with me their substance, would take no pay even when I was able to give it and asked for none when I was desperately poor. In pity, sympathy and mutual helpfulness I have found no difference between the races and nations among whom I have wandered, and I have verified the vision of the prophet, who cried from some such humble place as mine :

“ He looketh down from heaven,
He beholdeth the children of men,
He fashioneth their *hearts* alike.”

On that sad journey to America this was the one thought which buoyed me. Some day I shall come back and travel over these paths again and, like the king in the fairy tale, I shall richly reward all those who have been so kind to me.

Many a time since, I have visited every harbour from which emigrants go to the New World. I have travelled with them voluntarily from their homes into the steerage, as I then travelled from necessity, and I found no bad men until we came to the places where we were merchandise—the stuff to be exploited. And many of the men who seemed to know least about mercy were the men who had both wealth and culture.

Long before we reached Bremen, where for the

THE COMPARATIVE STEERAGE 31

first time I was to embark for America, the train was boarded by runners, who tagged us to make sure of their prey. The region near the railroad station was full of lodging houses whose motto was always to give as little as possible and get as much as they could. Many of these houses were tributary to the sub-agent or agents. The profit was not only from the fare, but from our board, so it was to the advantage of somebody to get us there as early as possible and keep us long.

I am sure that the steamship company knew nothing about this, and wanted to know nothing. It is only in the last two or three years that the lodging house problem, which finally became a menace to the health of the city, has received any kind of attention.

At the lodging house I was told all sorts of untruths about what to buy and how to prepare myself for the ordeal of examination. Efforts were made to frighten me. I was told that police supervision was so strict that I surely would be apprehended, and protection was offered me for a sum of money.

Neither the steamship companies nor the German Government, nor, in fact, any but the Italian Government has made the slightest effort to enlighten the steerage passenger, while every pos-

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sible means has been used to separate the poor man from his pittance.

Although in recent years immigrant stations which are well conducted have been erected at various ports, in many of them men are encouraged to drink, to get drunk and to buy things for which they have no need.

In at least one country, government officials have drawn heavy revenues from the steerage trade, and although I have made repeated efforts to have this pernicious practice stopped, I have accomplished nothing except to become *persona non grata* at a number of ports.

One country, and that is Hungary, under the guise of patriotism, has paid a bonus to an English steamship company, which has used the most wretched and slowest ships on its line. On the very day of embarkation I saw one of these ships taking on steerage passengers who were crowded into filthy quarters amid unspeakable stenches, while government officials were regaled with food and drink in the cabin. It may be said in favour of this English company that it too can wash its hands in innocence, for it also has turned this business over to a subsidiary company, so that its captains may read prayers with a clear conscience.

The Hamburg-American Line does the most for its steerage passengers at the home port. Its im-

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migrant station on the outskirts of the city of Hamburg is a model. It is not a huge barrack, like the one at Fiume, but a model village or city, walled and guarded.

The new arrivals come in one way, are examined, ticketed, washed, fumigated and fed. If they pass muster they are permitted to go into the inner quarters, a large and beautiful inclosure with a Protestant and Roman Catholic church, as well as a synagogue. There is an hotel adjusted to modest or more pretentious needs. A brass band plays the tunes of different fatherlands every afternoon. One might call this station almost perfect, and yet it has not quite convinced me; for I saw it once as a steerage passenger and again as an accredited investigator, and the difference I noted makes me feel that this company is shrewd, very shrewd indeed. Its officials are most loyal to it and are trained for that service. This company deals with the steerage passengers direct and gets all the revenue.

Steamship companies, although they seem alike, have for me a distinct personality. If I were blindfolded and led into a ship I could tell with which company I am, for travelling in the steerage has become a habit with me, and sensing conditions, second nature.

The North German Lloyd is the aristocrat

among the steamship companies. It has always catered to the cabin, but it has a conscience, which led it to farm out its steerage business, and the enticing, the grinding and fleecing which I have witnessed were done by sub-agents, presumably without the knowledge of the company.

Bremen is an honest, patrician city with a commercial aristocracy, and the North German Lloyd reflects the city. The company is as good as its word, but the *steerage passengers never got its word.*

Havre, the French port, was until lately "confusion worse confounded." I had the courage to travel via that port but once and that was quite sufficient. Repeated criticisms from many sources have called forth from the company's agents frequent and eloquent denials; so what is the use of criticising where there is no hope of reform?

On the Holland Line, which is slow, conservative, brusque and humane, I know every steerage from the Staatendam, just out of commission, to the new Rotterdam. Once under the care of the company nothing is to be feared, except that Dutch cleanliness is over-idealized and that the steerage often holds disillusionments.

The English lines are uncompromisingly English—honest, conservative and strict, in keeping the steerage passenger in his place. Travelling in the

DINING-ROOM IN THE HAMBURG-AMERICAN MODEL VILLAGE





THE COMPARATIVE STEERAGE 85

steerage is a bit of English lower class life transferred to the sea.

I recall a voyage on the White Star Liner, Teutonic. It was one of the roughest I ever experienced. The steerage was crowded and the nine days at sea were nine days in prison. I was desperately sick and several times crawled to the second-class deck for air and shelter, but invariably I was driven down to the hold, into the unbearable stenches. No steerage passenger's foot must pollute the second-cabin deck, and it is as impossible for a second-class passenger to step into the first cabin as it would be for a tradesman to be entertained in the home of some lordship—with one exception. On Sunday the second cabin may go to prayers in the first cabin, and that too is typically English.

The newer lines from the Mediterranean, from Italy and Austria, are humane and decent. The former because the government compels it, the latter because its chief revenue is from steerage business, and it pays.

On the whole, however, port conditions have grown better since my first venture across the sea. Many agencies watch over the welfare of the immigrants. The Y. M. C. A. looks especially after young men, offers advice and makes vital connection for them on the other side. Unfor-

tunately its workers are few and some lack linguistic equipment, although they make that up in genuine good will.

When I went down for the first time into the steerage, no one said a word of cheer, no one waved farewell. I left strangers standing on the receding wharf and I was among eleven hundred strangers. I was going to a land full of strangers, and when I reached my bunk in a dark, deep corner of the hold, something which felt like a cold, icy hand gripped my heart. When the ship left its mooring I felt as if my heartstrings were breaking, and I stretched out my hands to the fast receding shore, as if to grasp the loosened cables.

I dimly felt what it meant, but I did not realize how new was the life which awaited me, or how completely I was being severed from my past and my former self. Neither did I realize how, like the shuttle which the Master Weaver holds, I should be thrown back and forth across the sea, nor how closely my whole life was to be identified with that of the steerage.

III

THE VOYAGE IN A "NUTSHELL"

ONE can always locate the steerage without a chart, and there is no problem about finding one's cabin or berth, no anxiety as to deck chairs, or the question of first or second table. The odor of strong disinfectants, mingling with that of various vegetables, the smell of sheep-skin coats and of booted and unbooted feet, the cries of many children, the rough answers of sailors and stewards and the babel of guttural languages are all waymarks, if any are needed.

When one has slid down two and sometimes three flights of iron stairs, located at the narrowest point of fore or aft, and sees a crowded space which may hold from sixty to six hundred passengers who are tucking themselves away on a series of narrow shelves—then he is in the steerage. It is his first business to find a vacant bunk, and having found it, stake it by placing his belongings there. On the way he will have bestowed upon him various tin utensils and a thin gray cotton blanket, so that the aforementioned shelf becomes his dining-room, dressing-room, parlour and sleep-

ing-room; unless the Fates are kind and the Atlantic is quiet enough to leave a dry spot somewhere on the narrow margin of the deck.

The faster the boat, the less likely is he to find this dry spot, for the prow digs itself into the sea and is almost inundated, while the stern is so taken up by machinery and hatchways that even in a moderate sea it affords no comfort.

The food is served *à la mob*. A bell rings, the crowd rushes with its tin pails, and after being pushed and jammed the prize is carried off, to be eaten if possible.

Certain improvements have been made since my first journey. Groups are organized and only one man out of six or ten goes after the food. On the English lines there is a real dining-room with oilcloth covered tables, and there are stewards who serve one in human fashion. A third class has been created on some of the German ships, where the food is served in a similar way, but the steerage survives and the food there is still served *à la mob*.

I have made comparative studies of the different classes and have found that although the steerage pays a third as much on an average as the minimum first cabin rate, it receives less than one per cent. of sheltered deck, a trifle more than that of smoking and lounging rooms, not ten per cent. of

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food value and nothing in the way of courtesy or civility. And yet the steerage holds a luxury which is growing rarer and rarer in the cabin—good fellowship.

The Hamburg-American Line announces private decks for passengers on its new gigantic steamer, so that America's passion for democracy may at last be satisfied. It will be edifying, no doubt, to see the occupants of the cabins *de luxe* pacing in solitary confinement upon their luxurious private decks, but I do not envy them. There is nothing more precious than fellowship, and I hold as my greatest asset the wealth of contact with countless men and women whose lives I have touched and who have touched mine.

It was a wonderful group which I gathered around me on that first journey, and many of them are still my friends, although they have climbed out of the steerage and are travelling through life in cabins of various grades.

There was the young jeweller from Vienna, a jolly, thoughtless lad, who had lived a loose sort of life and was disowned by his family. I met him years after when he was working for \$15 a week and lived in a tenement in a great mid-Western city. I watched his little family growing and enjoyed his pride in it and his endeavour to get on. Now, when I visit him, he meets me at

the station with a seven-passenger automobile, none too large for his flock.

Then there was the butcher from Gotha who prided himself on his skill in making sausages; a rough-hewn fellow, a perfect product of his hard business. His cattle now graze upon a thousand hills and his daughter graduated last year from a woman's college in the East.

A husky Slovak boy bound for Streator, Ill., to go into the mines has "made good." I saw him two years ago when I lectured in that city. He is a business man of no mean ability who has accumulated wealth.

There was a Bohemian family whom my readers must meet again. A widow with five daughters and two sons. They brought with them into the steerage, written in their hearts, the songs of Bohemia. As they sang them so exquisitely, the dingy steerage became glorious from the joy of it, and the mighty engines of the ship seemed to play the accompaniment.

Besides the songs they had Bohemian goodies—boxes and baskets full. Occasionally I visit them, near South Bend, Ind., and I ask for certain cakes, whose taste has lingered upon my palate through all the changing years. I was greatly interested in this family; more especially in Anna and Lena, for they told me their love stories, perhaps to keep

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me from falling in love with them. They were both broken-hearted, but they have got bravely over it, for when the members of that family come to town from their scattered farms, "the few have become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation." They come in many buggies, and Anna's and Lena's children call me Uncle. I tell them that I knew their mothers before they knew them and they always wonder how that is possible.

Every steerage has some one who makes a clown of himself, who rejoices in playing pranks and does not become angry if the pranks are turned on him. This one had such a clown who led a jolly crew into all sorts of mischief, and out of it. Somewhere he had obtained a hand-organ, and what a delight it was! He led us in marches, playing, "O du lieber Augustine," or the Radecsky March, and the whole steerage had to follow. Those who did not go willingly were forced into the merry riot, and many a weary day passed less wearily because of his jollity. The orderings of Providence seem very strange, for he is now a prosperous undertaker in Michigan.

Of course there were days when every man was isolated, for there is at least one misery which does not "love company," the misery of seasickness. There were strange, awful hours when the waves came thundering over the deck and the mighty

wind played among the rigging, when the ship twisted and groaned in agony and we thought every moment was our last. There was, of course, little or no danger, but those who have passed through a storm at sea for the first time know something of how the heart fails within one even in the cabin; but in the steerage, with hatches down, with rattling chains and shaking beams all around and water coming down the ventilators—the fear becomes terror, and it could not have been greater had there been a real disaster.

After the storm there came calm and sunny days when gulls circled the ship and rested upon the quiet deep, and a tiny shore bird, driven by the wind, sought shelter on the deck. In the distance sails glided into view and disappeared; a long line of smoke betrayed the presence of many boats whose routes were to converge at the great port. The pilot came on board and we passed the Fire Ship, which guards the channel. Then the hours grew heavy and the morrow loomed with its uncertainty.

It dawned, with its ozone-laden air and azure sky, and in the far distance that which looked like a cloud grew clear and remained immovable—land! Then the rapture of it struggled with the care and burden and rose triumphantly over them.

America! we were in the magic, holy land—

SLOVAK IMMIGRANTS





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America! I have seen this rapture and felt it; I have rejoiced in it when others felt it, and I want all those to taste it who come and come again. Therefore, I have gone back and forth, and I should like to go unwearingly on to guide men into this rapture and to interpret to them its meaning.

I should like the entrance into the United States to be a poem to all who come, and not the horrible tragedy into which it often resolves itself when the first ecstasy is over. All the way across the sea I would make of every ship a school, with such fair comforts as men are entitled to, for their money.

I should like to teach them that they may enter without fear and without uttering a lie, so that those at the gate might know that these new comers are human, and treat them as such, so long as they conduct themselves properly.

I should like to teach the strangers that there is a fair reward for hard struggle and an honest living wage for an honest day's work. That they must guard their health by abstinence from intoxicating drink, and I should like to prohibit its sale on board of ship and everywhere else. For to the immigrants, the ignorant immigrants, alcohol is a lying curse. They believe that it strengthens and that no hard labour can be done without it.

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I should like to tell them also that their health will be guarded in mines and factories and that their bodies and souls have value to man and to God.

I should like to point to the Goddess of Liberty and say that she welcomes all who come in her name, that she guarantees freedom to all who obey law, that our law is always reasonable and that, if it is a burden, it falls upon the shoulders of rich and poor alike.

I should like to tell them that they have nothing to fear in this country except their own frailties, that there are no barriers here but their own clanishness and that the way to the best is open to all who walk reverently. This and more I should like to be able to teach; fragments of it I have taught, more of it than many of them will find true, I fear. But to me so much of it has been true that I should like to have all men find it so.

I have suffered much here, I have gone the whole scale of hunger, sorrow and despair; yet I say it again and again, Holy America! Holy America! And I want all men to be able to say it, as they said it with me under the lee of the land where free men live.

IV

THE LAST LANDING AND THE FIRST

THE last time I landed in New York there were several newspaper men waiting to interview me. The Captain sought me out to say a word of good-by and the first steward made his most profound bow, as he hoped that he had satisfied my every desire. Perhaps the crowning glory of this landing, was an automobile waiting to take me to a very comfortable hotel.

But habit is strong, and long before the steerage was to be disembarked I was at Ellis Island, to feel myself one with that endless stream of common folk of which I have been a part and from which, down in my heart, I have never been separated. Here too I was received most graciously.

Many of the inspectors know me as an incurable immigrant and some of them are dear, personal friends. The Commissioner of Immigration, a reticent but conscientious man, gave me the freedom of the station, while his assistant, an acquaintance of many years' standing, was certainly no less cordial. The missionaries and other welfare workers greeted me as one of them, and twice

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I had to pass through the ordeal of having my picture taken.

Returning to Battery Park I sought out Mrs. Noonan, the only survivor of the old Castle Garden days. Before her eyes have passed millions and millions of "furriners." (Of course she is not a foreigner, having been born in Ireland.) The immigrants did not all tarry before Mrs. Noonan, or she would not now be sitting at the gateway; but I stopped that very first time I landed and I stop now whenever I come to the Island.

The "furriner" who halts before Mrs. Noonan's basket is initiated into the mysteries of American fried cakes; she also sells oranges, apples and bananas. Just where or when or why this privilege was bestowed upon her I do not know; but she is Irish, and in the early days, and even in these latter days, to be Irish was and is equal to a patent of nobility.

"You say you seen Mr. Watchorn?" she asked with her old-time Irish smile. "Sure, he's the foinest gintleman that I've ever known. He niver passed over to the Islard without stopping and saying, 'How are you, Mrs. Noonan?' Of course Mr. Williams is a nice man too, but when he's busy loike I don't often see him. I don't mean to say that he ain't a gintleman too, but I niver got to know him as I did Mr. Watchorn."

As another crowded ferry came in and the passengers were unloaded Mrs. Noonan continued:

"Them's Polanders, Mister; a foine looking, strong lot they be. Yes, I loike them better than the Dagoes. The Dagoes kind a goes against my blood.

"I said to Gineral Leary twenty-five years ago, maybe it's more, I am kind a gettin' old—I says, 'Gineral,' says I, 'don't let them Dagoes in.' And he says, says he: 'You're right, Mrs. Noonan. I've got to talk to the Prisident about it.' But they're comin', Mister. I'm not sayin' that there ain't good Dagoes too, but they kind a go against my blood, and I says to Gineral Leary, says I—"

I interrupted by telling her that I bought my first bananas of her here over twenty-five years ago.

"No, not here," she corrects; "over there at Castle Garden," and she smiles.

"Them was grand days, Mister, when Gineral Leary was the boss. There wasn't so many fur-riners comin' then; mostly Irish and Dutch, and there wasn't so much fuss and feathers about them neither.

"Yes, them was grand days. I've been here ever since. I knew them all—but I tell you Mr. Watchorn he was a foine gintleman—he always

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said, 'How do you do, Mrs. Noonan?' And you say you seen him?"

"Yes," I said, "and I told him I had seen you, and he said, 'She is a fine old lady, that Mrs. Noonan.'"

Her wrinkled face lighted up. "Well, I told you Mr. Watchorn is a *foine* gentleman," and she continued her reminiscences.

Mrs. Noonan and I have had this conversation frequently, with but few variations. She is Irish—by which I mean that she is a diplomat, an opportunistic optimist. I hope she will not be offended when she hears that I have called her names. If she were not a diplomat she would talk more, or rather *tell* more; but then perhaps she would not have kept her post, unless selling fried cakes at Ellis Island has become a Civil Service appointment.

I go to see Mrs. Noonan every time I come from the Island, not only because she is Irish—therefore wonderfully human—but because whenever I see her I am reminded of the "pit from which I was digged." I hear the great Apostle Paul saying, "For by grace ye are saved, and not of yourselves, lest any man should boast."

Yet I really hold a grudge against Mrs. Noonan, for when I landed the first time and gave her my five cents for bananas, she did not tell me that I

must not eat them with the skins on. I tell her this every time I see her, and her usual reply is, "Well, I wouldn't tell it, if I was you, for you must have been greener than you looked."

In those days when Mrs. Noonan sold fried cakes and bananas in Castle Garden and I landed for the first time in the United States, medical examination was much more perfunctory than now, and I do not believe there were more than half a dozen inspectors who searched into the secrets of my pocketbook and other deeper mysteries. I know that it was all over very soon and that I stood on the threshold of the United States, the acrid taste of banana peeling upon my lips and around me a surging mass of malevolent looking gentry, each one anxious to get hold of me and carry me bodily, if need be, to the lodging house which he represented. A dozen voices shouted at me, "Hey, Landsman!" By the law of chance I did fall into the hands of a landsman who led me triumphantly to a lodging house on Bleecker Street.

The word saloon on one of the doors we passed seemed to attract him, and he proposed that we enter. When I discovered its nature I wanted to retreat, but he had already visualized his desires by the mystic sign known to all landsmen, and two glasses of foaming lager stood before us. This

episode made me ten cents the poorer at a time when ten cents looked tremendously large, for there were not many coins left in my purse.

At last we reached the lodging place. It was the dinner hour, and for the first time I put my feet under an American table. I was hungry, and whatever I paid for the meal—I think it was fifty cents—it was worth it; not because I ate enough food, but because I learned an important lesson.

The dinner was served à la second class American boarding house. Everything came on at once and disappeared at once, while I meekly waited my turn.

A German barber, who had a shop next door, said to me after we left the table:

"Young man, in this country you must remember that God helps those who help themselves."

After dinner I went up and down Broadway looking for something to do.

The only personal asset I had was linguistic ability, with special emphasis on philology in the field of the Slavic language group. Unfortunately, on my way up as far as City Hall Park, I met no one who was looking for a man with such academic values. In fact, I did not think much about what I should do. The sights were new and strange, and no doubt I was stranger, for I was hailed by

many a lad as "greenhorn," a term which grew more familiar to me as time passed.

I did not venture far, for I knew no English and had but little money. On returning to the boarding house and paying for my supper and a night's lodging in advance, I did not have a single cent left. The next morning I woke in the great city without money and without friends.

All that day I walked the streets looking for work, guided in my wanderings by the want ads in the *New York Staats Zeitung*. Bartenders headed the list of those wanted, barbers came next; bakers too were in demand and butchers and clothing cutter. Although my eyes wandered over and over again to the letter U, there seemed to be no need for university men, with special training in philology.

That day I had nothing to eat. I knew I was in a free country, but the only thing which was free, and that made no little impression upon me, was ice water. I helped myself to it, not so much to quench my thirst, as in the vain hope that I would disarrange my digestive apparatus and thus stop its incessant call for food; but the more water I drank the hungrier I grew.

When evening came and the stores were being closed I remembered that my mother had given me the address of a distant relative who many

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years before had gone to New York. It was not hard to find, but as it was over eighty blocks away, and I had to walk the entire distance, I was more dead than alive when I reached the place. Upon making myself known I was very cordially received, and I remember most vividly how delicious the *delicatessen* which were served me tasted and how I went to sleep in my chair while trying to answer all the inquiries about the people left behind. Thus closed my first full day in the United States.

I have since frequently walked over that same route, and I always recall the entire strangeness of it; the loneliness, the hunger, the weariness, and at last night, under the roof of unknown relatives who shared their home with me. The things I remember best, however, are that ice water was free in the United States, that there were no soldiers in the streets, that policemen were scarce, that saloon meant a drinking place and that there were many of them, that bananas might be relished by Americans, but that to a civilized European they were tough on the outside and mushy within; but above all else—that this is a country in which “God helps those who help themselves.”

V

LOOKING FOR WORK AND THE FIRST
SUNDAY

WITH morning came the still unsolved question, what to do for a living. My friends suggested that I go from one hotel to another in the hope that my languages would be of value. Accordingly, with the borrowed capital of twenty-five cents in my pocket I rode in the elevated—a great luxury in those foot-sore days. From that vantage point I could at least see how the other half lived.

Occasionally I now ride on that ungainly structure to revive old impressions, and always in the hope that those swift glimpses of the privacy of the poor will inspire me to interpret this vitascope in some superb way. Now that I know these avenues without and within, I realize more than ever how little power I have for the task and how futile would be the attempt.

The rapid view of tidy parlours and stuffy bedrooms, in which men have dreamed away misery and risen with new hope; the ugly fire escapes dangerously full of household goods temporarily

out of use; the wonderful festooning of wash-lines, tier upon tier, with their motley array of clothing waving in the wind—all this interests me now as it astonished me then.

Tousle-headed women lean out of the windows to catch a breath of air, relaxing between the monotonous tasks of the day; children play in the balconies like birds in their cages. One has a fleeting vision of backs and heads bending over the day's task, as oblivious to the rush and roar of the traffic as if it were part of the mechanism of the universe.

There are dingy lofts in which machinery drives the workers and the hunger for wealth drives both; lodging houses whose windows are covered by almost impenetrable dust through which one dimly sees rows of chairs with half asleep men. The bright spots are furnished by an increasing number of the mystic three balls and enormous stretches of gold-lettered signs extolling the virtues of various breweries. Then through blocks of dangling old clothes into more roar of traffic and at last that glorious oasis, City Hall Park, whose grateful shade I learned to know and whose benches afforded me many a bit of sleep in those hard days of the past.

All this I saw on that journey down-town on the elevated. I think that down-town and up-

town are the first English words I learned in New York.

Ah! but I must not forget my earliest glimpse of Brooklyn Bridge, the one redeeming feature of that nightmare of a journey. The marvellous spider web of steel reminded me of the bridge of the judgment which the fancy of the rabbis built, long before the New World had risen into the consciousness of the Old.

The rabbis say that in the Day of Judgment two bridges will lead across the depths of Gehenna into the land of bliss. One of them, built of heavy beams, will look strong; the other will be like a spider's web, resting upon the clouds. The multitudes of those risen from the dead will be asked to cross. Those who are gross and earthly and have no faith will crowd upon the solid looking structure of heavy beams; while the righteous who have trusted in Jehovah will go over the one poised high and loftily upon the clouds. When the multitude of those who lacked faith is within sight of the other shore the bridge will break and they will go down into the eternal death; but those who trusted in Jehovah will pass safely over this celestial Brooklyn Bridge into Paradise.

One thing is sure. A greater multitude of Israel crosses the Brooklyn Bridge than the rabbis ever saw in their most fantastic visions of the Day of

Judgment, but as yet the righteous and the wicked
use this half-celestial thoroughfare in common.

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I began my search for a job at the Astor House, but was not received as cordially as when I came there in later years with bag and baggage; in fact, I was rather uncivilly told that they did not need any Dutchman. A more polite refusal met me at an hotel further up-town. On Fourteenth Street in a German hotel I was offered an assistantship at the bar, which I refused. At the Fifth Avenue they would none of me. Altogether I visited some twenty of the leading hotels.

How I spent the twenty cents of my borrowed capital I do not know, but it is needless to say that I did not take a meal at any of the hostellries I visited. I walked from Twenty-third Street to Eightieth Street and arrived home tired and discouraged.

The day had not been altogether fruitless, for I learned that time-tables, toilet appliances and stationery are free at the hotels. I had also learned that I was a Dutchman and the difference between down-town and up-town; I had seen City Hall Park and the Brooklyn Bridge, had a glimpse of New York private life from the elevated and learned to eat bananas the right way. Certainly all this was cheap, for twenty-five cents.

Two ways were left open to me. One was to write home, tell of my plight and ask for financial assistance. This I was much too proud to consider. The second was, to go to work at the cloak trade, the sure harbour of refuge for those who are unfit for the harder tasks and whose attainments have as yet no market value.

Fortunately, the next day was Sunday; not only could I rest, but it was an opportunity to find a job. Sunday is the day when acquaintances meet in the coffee houses and the greenhorn becomes a subject of conversation and consideration. That first Sunday in the United States brought distinct impressions. It was one of those light-flooded days of which New York has so many. The Avenue was crowded by throngs at leisure, many of the worst noises had ceased and from open windows were wafted the mingled odours of coffee and cinnamon cake.

The children looked unusually clean, saloons were closed—in front—and I could hear church bells ringing. Men and women were strolling or going to church, and we did not rush madly to the elevated when we went down-town to the Coffee House.

The one we entered was . distinct disappointment to me. Coming from Vienna, where the Coffee House is at its best, I expected to find it

bodily transplanted, "revised and improved." Instead, I saw a shabby room stiflingly full of cigarette smoke. There was no attempt at decoration and the floor was far from immaculate. Seated at small tables were men playing cards and retailing the gossip from home.

This particular Coffee House was frequented by cloak shop workers, many of them acquaintances of my relatives. To them the greenhorn was introduced and by them his problem was discussed.

Their attitude toward the new comer was one of benevolent condescension, and although I was a stranger to them they were all eager to help, even while they were making fun of me, more especially because I doffed my hat and bowed low before every one to whom I was introduced.

At last my fate was decided: I was to report on Monday at a certain number on Canal Street, bring an apron and try my luck at pressing cloaks.

As I had never found pleasure at cards, I excused myself and was advised to find my way home by way of Fifth Avenue and Central Park. I still remember the fashionably dressed crowds, the carriages and liveried coachmen and the magnificent residences. I was most impressed by the churches, first by their names and then by their number.

It was eleven o'clock and rather timidly I drifted

into one of them. It was all strangely new and at first not at all impressive. The room was rather unc ecclesiastical, the people not over reverent and the organ music too secular for my taste. I remember hearing with pleasure the fine strains of the Doxology. The hymn which followed I did not like, and when a quartet sang an anthem I thought I was in a concert hall rather than in a church. I could not, of course, understand the sermon, and my thoughts went back to my early soul struggles. I recalled my first glimpse of a Christian Church; the organ music, the dim light, the incense and the mystery of the mass. I recalled my wavering between faith and unbelief, my firm denial of the Deity and the latent hunger and thirst for contact with that great Something which could not be blotted out by syllogisms and which had defied my defiance of it.

I thought of home, the great series of disappointments my mother had suffered in me and how, after this useless flight to America, I was penniless on the streets of the city.

By nature I am a Rationalist with the outer edges of my reasoning tinged by mysticism; yet in the great crises of my life I have always felt a certain guidance. Of course I willed to do many things and did them, and thereby brought harm to myself, and no doubt to others; but every onward

and upward step seemed to be not of my choosing, and although often they were steps into the dark, they all led to a definite goal. When a friendless youth in that strange church I listened to the preacher, not understanding what he said, I felt that same premonition which had come to me when, as a child, I heard the Latin chant and saw the white-robed priest—some day you will be like this and do this self-same thing.

I passed through the door of that very New York church a short time ago and stood where the preacher stood whom I did not understand. I spoke of the poor babe in Bethlehem and the boy in Nazareth; of children in the city streets and of the youths who perish there—and then I remembered, although I did not say it, that not so many years ago I sat in the shadow of yonder gallery, penniless and hungry and homesick, and that, although the schooling was hard and bitter, and the rough road long, I was being led that weary way to prepare me to speak as I then spoke.

Dinner was late that first Sunday and there were guests, among them the first American girls I had met, and that is worth noting. Although they were only ten years, more or less, removed from the steerage, they were entirely different creatures from girls like them in Vienna.

They were very self-assertive, exceedingly loud, garishly dressed and too free in their contact with men, but attractive nevertheless. There were also two sisters from Buda-Pesth, thoroughly Americanized, even to their name. I have good reason to remember them, for we worked in the same shop. They helped me over those awkward, green days of my apprenticeship and I have never ceased to be grateful. They also told me of Cooper Institute where they attended classes in literature, and at the dinner table we had quite a learned discussion about Dickens, whom they were studying and whom I knew in an excellent translation.

They gave me my first lesson in English. I discovered what a sweet potato was and how it tasted. Somehow I caught the word mirror, and added it to my vocabulary; and I learned with horror that young women chew gum in America.

This wonderful Sunday had a rather sad ending. Late in the evening my host went to the saloon, through the back door. He did not come home at bedtime so his son and I went to look for him and found him lying in the gutter, dazed, with his pockets rifled. We carried him home and there was much lamentation, for we thought him dangerously hurt. When the doctor came I added another word to my vocabulary—"knock-out drops"—a hard word to remember. They were put into his glass of beer,

after which his week's wages and his watch and chain were taken from him. He was the sadder and I the wiser man, for I developed a wholesome dread of that American institution—the saloon. Indeed, I carried much into life out of that first Sunday:

The contrasting quiet of the day.

The repellent Coffee House life.

The assurance of a job.

The sacred quiet and uplift of the church.

The American girls with their chatter and chewing gum, their free and easy manners and their generous, good hearts.

A wholesome dread of the saloon with its "knock-out drops."

Not a bad showing for the first Sunday in America.

VI

IN THE SWEAT SHOP

IN New York recently I lectured before a Woman's Club whose membership is composed of the so-called four hundred. At an informal tea which followed, my charming hostess asked me whether I am not too optimistic in regard to the various problems arising out of immigration to the United States.

"I am doing everything," I replied, "to tone down my optimism. I go back and forth in the steerage, I come here, to the East Side, and live again among these people; but invariably I leave them with a song of hope in my heart."

"The East Side isn't the place to grow pessimistic, you have to come to Fifth Avenue."

The judgment of the lady who said this ought to be of value, for she lives on Fifth Avenue, and the name she bears has been associated with that thoroughfare for two generations. After the tea some of the ladies asked me to take them to a point of vantage where they too might get the thrill of optimism into their jaded systems.

We stood on the corner of Grand Street and the

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Bowery at about fifteen minutes past six and let the great current of the workers sweep by us. Row upon row of chattering girls, sedate, solemn-looking men, bright-eyed, energetic youths followed each other. Company after company, regiment after regiment, an army of them. When they had passed I said:

“How do you feel?”

“As if I had been on a mountain top,” said one.

A delightful old lady who was old enough and sensible enough to glory in her age said:

“I had the same thrill that I felt when I was in Washington at the time the Army of the Republic returned from the battlefields. It was sad, but then I said: ‘The country is safe.’ I can say it now.”

If one were to analyze this statement critically he would say that it is merely the thrill one gets in watching the masses, the contagion of the mob; but why does one not feel it, say on Fifty-seventh Street and Fifth Avenue? There also are masses, glittering masses of horses and men—an army too. Yet even those who are a part of that throng feel, if they feel at all, the emptiness, the uselessness and the danger of it all.

When I was an involuntary member of the army of workers in the clothing trade, it was in its begin-

nings. There were only a few large firms and a few small ones along Broadway. These have grown into more than two thousand, crowding into upper Broadway and coming close to the fashionable residence district, too close indeed for the price of real estate. I was one of about five thousand workers who now number more than eighty thousand, producing three hundred million dollars' worth of clothing.

I must confess that I was not at all thrilled that morning when I joined this army, nor was I depressed; for although I had vague apprehensions, it was a chance to earn a living, and I did not have to face the awful alternative of asking help from my mother, gladly as I knew she would give it.

The building in which the shop was located has long ago been torn down, and at that time was a fire trap, unfit to house people who had to both work and live in it. The boss, and that was another new word for my vocabulary, was an Austrian Jew, a very gentle sort of man with a mild voice. The real boss was an Irish forelady with the traditional red hair and quick tongue of her race, and she possessed all the qualities of bossism which the real boss lacked.

I pride myself upon not having any race prejudices, but smouldering within me, and ready to burst out any time I give it a chance, is a prejudice

against the Irish, begotten in that shop, which the forelady ruled with an iron hand. To those of us who worked, she was the personification of Pharaoh or, better still, of Haman, and the gibbet upon which the latter hung was erected many a time in our minds. Of course the Irish oppressor was swinging from it, while we praised Jehovah for his wonderful deliverance. It was not that the work was hard, bitterly hard that first day and for many days to come, but that she was a tyrant and seemed to delight in our suffering.

I was a presser, but she was the oppressor, and every garment which exacted sweat drops because of the hard work also drew tears because of her chicanery.

The hot iron, weighing ten or fifteen pounds, which I was taught to guide across the cloaks, weighed a ton before noon, and that short hour, while it came none too soon, ended all too quickly. With some borrowed money I went to buy a luncheon, and the numerous temptations for my palate deserve a chapter of their own. I had ten cents allotted me for this meal. After looking at a hot *gulyas* and filling my nostrils with the varied odours of other foods beyond my reach, I bought a sandwich and a pie. Both of them were new words for my vocabulary and new food to my gastronomic experience.

I wonder whether any one realizes how much mystery there is for a greenhorn in the word *sandwich*. When I first saw it written on a sign, in the plural, I used all my philological training to lead it back to its etymological origin; and when I ate the sandwich I was disappointed to find that so wonderful a word should be just commonplace pieces of bread and butter, with a slice of cheese between them.

The pie also was a disillusionment and a waste of money besides, for between the soggy crusts was a mysterious mixture of meat and raisins—an impossible combination even to a hungry European cloak presser. I still feel the horror of that first bite, and I have something akin to hydrophobia when mince pie is even mentioned.

The afternoon was vastly worse than the morning. I scorched the hem of a garment and I felt scorched all over when the Irish forelady got through with me. Of course I could not understand what she said, but that was quite unnecessary. Her gestures would have been understood by a deaf and dumb man, and her red hair seemed like a burning bush, in her anger.

That night I felt as sore as if I had been passed through a mill. The supper made me homesick, for the sweet smell of well-known dishes recalled home and its comforts. I am not sure

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but that the noodle soup grew saltier from my tears.

American people wonder at the tenacity with which the immigrant clings to the foods of his Fatherland. It is not strange, for the nostrils, the lips, the whole body retain precious memories of odours and tastes which are seldom forgotten. I am inclined to believe that noodle soup, with the right kind of seasoning, touches more channels of memory than—say, a lullaby or even a picture of the homeland.

The Jewish lawgivers knew this fact, although they never studied psychology, and every historic occurrence which they wished to memorialize is steeped in some dietary law and so forever preserved. They could trust the palate more than the spoken word or the written page.

Tired as I was and bruised as I felt, I found some pleasure and consolation in the society of the two girls from Buda-Pesth on whom I called that evening. They assured me that although the way of the greenhorn was hard, when I knew English I would be sure to find some place suited to my attainments. Accordingly, they arranged to take me to night school where I could complete my knowledge of the language of which I then knew: down-town and up-town, mirror, boss, knock-out drops, banana, elevated, figure, custo-

mer, cloak, presser, sandwich, oh, horrors! mince pie, saloon, greenhorn and forelady.

The days in the shop were hard yet not monotonous, for I added new experiences each day and my vocabulary increased rapidly. I could now say, You bet, and Shut up. Gradually, also, I was introduced into the gossip of the shop. I learned, of course, that everybody hated the forelady except the Irish girls, of whom there were not a few in the most lucrative positions. It was surmised in the shop that the boss and the forelady were good friends—better friends than they ought to be, considering that he was a Jew and married beside. Moreover, the head designer was supposed to be in love with the head trimmer.

To me the most interesting people were the "figures," of which the shop boasted a number 34, a 36 and a 38. Figure, in that day of my limited vocabulary, meant a lady with more or less golden hair of uncertain hue, gold filled teeth and a powdered face, who did nothing but try on cloaks and walk up and down before the customer, which seemed a very strange word to be used in connection with a man who bought cloaks. When I heard that the number 34, for instance, received sixteen dollars a week, I marvelled at the inequality of life in a country in which men and women are supposed to be equal.

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The three "figures," the forelady, the head designer, the Irish errand girl, with the rest of us who toiled and sweated and were sweated, the little intrigues of each day filled that first week with action. It was a drama which now is being replayed in my memory, and it reached its climax when, at the end of the week, I held in my trembling hand my first pay envelope containing three dollars and fifty cents. I felt supremely happy, although I was in debt even after giving three dollars to the friends who had advanced my luncheon and car fare money.

It was the first money I ever earned, and those three dollars and fifty cents looked larger than any salary I have received since.

As I have never reached any alarming heights in that direction, I do not know how I might feel if for instance I were drawing the salary of the president of a life insurance company; but I doubt that I could feel as honestly happy. I knew that I had really earned every cent of that money and the joy of it was not tainted by the thought that I had been creating wealth for my boss; nor had I reached that exalted point where I believed that the cloak industry was entirely dependent upon my efforts as a presser.

I really found joy in my calloused hands. Every blister meant more to me than certain slight

sword cuts in my university days. The ache in my back, the weight on my shoulders, the hardening muscle of my arms exalted me before myself, and I really thought life worth living, although it was lived in a sweat shop.

That Sunday I walked again on Fifth Avenue, but with a prouder step, for I was a worker. I was beginning to know how to press cloaks, and from that time to this I joy most in the fact that I was taught by hard experience the value of labour. Again I went into a church, one full of colour and the odours of sanctity, and when the priest elevated the host I recalled Goethe's lines:

"Who never ate with tears his bread,
Who never through night's heavy hours
Sat weeping on his lonely bed—
He knows you not, ye heavenly powers!"

VII

LEARNING ENGLISH AND GOING TO PRINCETON

EUROPE still wonders at our power to assimilate the people from every nation and tongue, and to our own country it also seems like a miracle, performed upon us and those who came before. We sometimes doubt that it will continue to do its work on these new comers who are supposed to be made of coarser clay.

The forces at work which act automatically if not miraculously are:

1. The air, with its excess of ozone and the erratic performances of the mercury, with its sudden slides below zero, which set a new pace for the most sluggish blood.
2. The fact that there are but few, if any, geographic and climatic pockets in which a type may survive, unmodified.
3. The geographic forces which do so much to change racial types and are as yet uncontrolled by any trust. The overcrowding in city tenements, however, is a serious check upon this elemental

power to assimilate our mixture of human material.

4. No small factor is the food, which is so little provincialized that San Francisco and New York eat the same breakfast foods and bake their bread from the same brand of flour.

5. The economic opportunity, which thus far has permitted men to rise to a higher standard—the American standard of living.

6. The public school which dots the land and grinds all the grain into the same grist.

The one force, however, most vital in this process is the English language, which is not foisted upon the stranger by any official decree, but which has back of it a still greater compulsion.

If there were a law compelling all immigrants to learn the English language, this country would be a linguistic battlefield in which every tongue from Sanskrit to Esperanto would struggle for supremacy and so destroy any hope of ever assimilating the "stranger within our gates." This subtle force of a common language creeps in everywhere, just because it is not driven. It comes in by single words like *yes* and *no*, and modifies others, like *gemovt* and *gejumpt*. Then it comes by leaps and bounds until only a vestige of the mother tongue remains.

The scion of a prominent New York family of

German extraction gave this example of how English was spoken in his grandfather's home:

"Johnnie, come in oncet already."

"What should I?" replies the voice from without.

"Because dinner. Father and Mother's on the table and Charlie's half et."

The small boy was asked by that same grandfather to "run de alley tru and make de dog loose."

"Hurry you, Mother, and make my back shut," is a literal translation from the German, heard in these latter days when female attire has changed front.

"I will take a revolver und schiess," is an interesting example; while "fight talk" is a most picturesque designation of a college debate witnessed by a new comer.

Small wonder, then, that I was eager to learn well the language which floated around me in such interesting bits. Accordingly, I went to Cooper Union on Monday night and was duly enrolled as a pupil.

The class was much too large and made up of an unruly group of all sorts and kinds. Many of them had never been to school, which made the task of the teacher most difficult. The method of teaching English and the text-books have im-

proved very much since then, but even now the teacher too often forgets that he is dealing with men who have toiled all the day, and that the brain is apt to be sluggish. On that account "many are called but few chosen"; that is, but few stay until the end of the course.

If our teacher had met us as men and not as children, if into that weary hour he had thrown a grain of humour to relax us, if some one would have sung a simple tune in English, more might have remained after a week than fourteen out of a class of more than ten times that number. Yet I learned a great deal those nights, especially during the return home, when I was accompanied by some men who had quickly acquired, out of school, a rather lurid vocabulary.

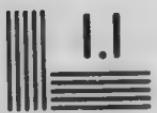
To me this chance to learn a new language was a great boon, and I still pity the man who can visualize a thought in but one. The intellectual alertness of some children of the immigrants is due to the fact that they often know more than their mother tongue.

My first conversation in English was held with the Irish forelady. I used some of the language I had learned out of school, the etymology of which I had not studied beforehand. To my amazement she flew into a rage, and with her red hair like a flaming aurora borealis, went to the boss. As



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a result, on Saturday night I had a chance to further apply my knowledge of English, for written neatly upon the pay envelope was this sentence, "Your services are no longer required."

This yielded at least two new words for my vocabulary and not only lost me my job, but exhausted the patience of my relatives, to whom I was still in debt.

That Sunday was a very blue one. I did not go on Fifth Avenue, but on that day of grace I studied the want column of the *New York Staats Zeitung* all the way from barber and bartender down to pressers.

On Monday morning I was one of the army of the unemployed in search of a job. I do not know how many addresses I had where pressers were wanted, but I do know that greenhorns were not in demand, and that night I was both penniless and homeless.

I have seen Broadway since, many, many times. I have seen it in varied moods and have felt its thrill, its materialistic glory, but I can remember it best as a long, cruel "lane which has no turning."

"Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven"; but not when they fall asleep on a park bench on the City Hall Square. As long as I contemplated the bit of heaven which

was above me I was left unmolested, but as soon as I shut my eyes a disturber of the peace, clad in a blue uniform, would touch my head or shoulder with his wand and waken me from my enchantment.

In the morning, long before the shops were opened, I had a chance to study English before breakfast, which on those days was particularly late.

There were signs along Broadway and adjacent streets which obviated the necessity of buying a newspaper to study the want columns. They declared the needs of the particular trades in which men were needed, and I climbed up and down many a loft, but no one wanted me. In great humiliation of spirit and depression of mind and body I went back to the shop from which I had been discharged and sought reinstatement. This the Irish forelady refused.

Here one thing happened which greatly modified my prejudices and made me believe that even the Irish have hearts. It was luncheon time, but I had not yet had breakfast. The odour of food was maddening and I was hungry enough to have eaten even mince pie. It was the Irish errand girl who said :

" Say, greeny, you look hungry. Have a bite."
Since that time I have received many a dinner

invitation engraved and embossed, but this one, although less elegantly worded, was the most welcome.

The other pressers in the shop promised to help me get a job, and one of them, a Russian Jew, asked me to share his quarters until it was found. Accordingly, I moved from City Hall Park to East Houston Street, at that time narrower and dirtier than now.

There were two rooms in that tenement and a wife and two children, but there was room. I suppose it has always been true that the fewer rooms men have the more room there is for the stranger. I slept that night, as I wish I could sleep now—and until late in the morning. That evening, through the good offices of my comrades in the shop, I had a new job. This time I was to learn to be a cutter. The wages were modest, but there was a chance to learn a trade in which skill counted more and mere physical power less.

I "made good" and at the end of the week boasted of seven dollars in wages, enough to pay the week's bill, though I was still in debt.

For more than a month I went to night school every evening, after ten hours' hard work. I again enjoyed the leisure of the Sunday and began reading English books. The first one I drew from the Public Library was "David Copperfield," and I

had learned enough English to laugh heartily at Dickens's humour and shed many a bitter tear over his superb pathos.

At the end of the month I had sufficient money to replenish my worn-out wardrobe, and a week after spending almost my last cent on good clothes, again received a pay envelope with the fatal message, "Your services no longer required." It was "slack time," and everybody was "laid off." Thus I received my first lesson in economics.

I learned that there is a time when men and women work furiously ten or twelve hours a day, that mountains of clothes are manufactured and that all at once, as if it were a law of nature, comes this "slack time" when men and women, eager to labour because they must, cannot get work.

So again, I was walking along Broadway with nothing to do except look for a job, any kind of job. I worked intermittently in a baker's shop, a feather renovating establishment and a sausage factory. I earned enough money to keep body and soul together, but was growing more and more discouraged and my spirit was broken. When finally even these casual jobs grew fewer, I determined to leave New York. Somewhere I had read the advice of a famous man, "Go West, young man." Accordingly, I set out for the land of the setting sun by taking the ferry across to

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Jersey City. That same evening I bought a ticket as far as my money would carry me, which was not very far. I arrived at my destination that night and went to sleep on the platform of the freight house. I did not even have a "stone for a pillow," nor did I dream of "angels ascending and descending," yet I too "wrestled," not with angels, but with mosquitoes. I awoke very early and found that I was at a place called Princeton Junction, which was not a place at all, but merely a station and a few out-buildings.

I did not know that I was within a few miles of a great university. I discovered that institution later. I have preached and lectured there since, and some of my dearest friends are connected with it, but in the meanwhile I had to "go West and grow up with the country."

VIII

AN INVOLUNTARY TOLSTOYAN

IN my student days I visited Count Tolstoy on his estate at Yasnaya Polyana. One day I saw him cutting grain, following a row of peasants as they swung their scythes.

"Try it," he said to me; and when, after many clumsy attempts, I finally dropped the crude blade and wiped the perspiration from my face, he remarked:

"Young man, for a few minutes, at least, you have been doing the will of God. He has not made your hands merely to hold gloves and a cane and cigarettes, but to do useful, honest work." And he left me, filled with dismay, for I *had* gloves, a cane and cigarettes.

From that day till the day when I stood in front of a farmhouse on the Trenton road I had not attempted any field work and but little useful labour of any kind, such as Tolstoy would approve and call honest.

When I knocked at the front door, the answer was a gruff voice directing me to the kitchen.

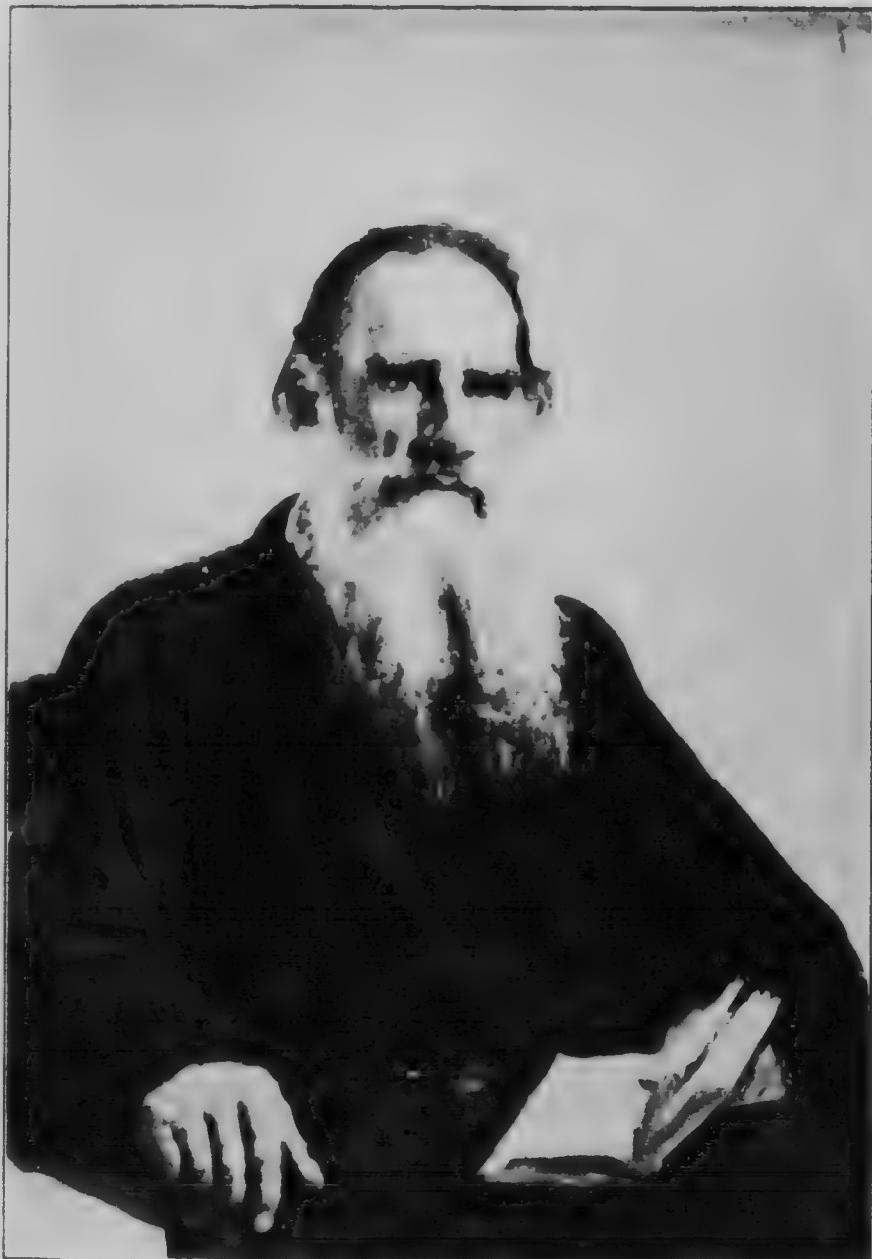
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There I was met by the housekeeper and general factotum, a German woman of middle age, who spoke her mother tongue with the soft Saxon accent and the politeness proverbial among her countrymen. She engaged me, although the matter of wages was not mentioned, and indicated my manifold duties. I was to do chores of various kinds, attend to a number of horses and at that particular time help in making hay.

This farmer and others in New Jersey, as I have learned since, specialized in greenhorns, and there was a number of that species at work. From the older ones I soon learned that the place was a new kind of sweat shop.

For some reason Maria, the housekeeper, took to me kindly and treated me with the consideration which a woman of her class naturally shows a University man. The food the men were compelled to eat was wretched, but there was always an especial dish for me, its origin no doubt being the boss's table. I had some difficulty in doing the unaccustomed chores, and the harnessing of a horse usually involved me in an entanglement of straps and buckles which the boss always rewarded by a lesson in very choice English of the sort which lost me my first job.

It is needless to say that I came to this farm half starved and much discouraged, but the whole-



Leon Valaney



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some food and the work in the open, although hard, soon brought back strength and courage.

The shop work had accustomed my muscles to labour, but the work on the farm was much harder and, on the whole, required a kind of skill and endurance which I did not possess.

I never before realized how much science is necessary in the handling of a hayfork, and the first time I held that peaceful tool in my hand I recognized in it a symbol of the Yankee spirit.

I compared it with the clumsy affairs I had seen in Europe. I noted how every bit of superfluous weight was eliminated, and how thin and shapely were the prongs, with just the right curve to hold firmly their load and release it easily. Not even a skyscraper in later years aroused in me so much admiration for the American as that hayfork, which, in spite of its grace and lightness, raised wonderful blisters on my palms and made me ache so that I could scarcely lie down.

Looking back over the discipline of my life, I count that work on the farm the most useful, and if I were asked to reconstruct the curriculum of any university, I should add to it a stiff course in Agricultural Labour.

To learn to pitch hay may not be as alluring to our college youth as to learn to pitch a ball, but it is the more useful exercise, from the moral

and physical standpoint certainly, while as a training for the mind it may hold undreamed-of values.

To plunge the fork straight into the depths of a fragrant mound of hay, strain every muscle of the body to lift it, and when poised high in air, drop it just where the load has need of it and then withdraw the fork gently, so that not a wisp of hay be thrown down, is both a graceful and a useful art. To carry a hayfork on my shoulder gave me a greater thrill than I had ever received from carrying the student's sword.

Blessed is the country and safe from decadence when shovel and hoe, not golf club and tennis racket, are the insignia of the gentleman; although unrelieved toil may become as degrading to the mind and soul as unrelieved play.

The fact that the bed given me was so unclean that I preferred to sleep in the barn, that the day began before sunrise and did not end till long after sunset, and that the boss was a tyrant, did not do much to elevate my spirit; fortunately I had inner resources which defied those brutalizing influences.

In contemplating that phase of my life, which I have frequently and voluntarily repeated, I often ask myself what the association with these rough labourers did for me. I have long ago come to

the conclusion that I lost nothing and gained much. After all, I found down there at the bottom real, fundamental, human values.

One of my co-labourers was Heinrich, an old sailor, temporarily thrown upon solid ground. He had sailed every sea and knew every port from Rio to London town. He was a bad man—that is, he drank like a sailor who is on shore, and although he knew no moral restraint and had seen the inside of every hell of which civilized cities boast, he was just what he was and made no pretence at decency. But when it came to defending the weak, to taking the heavier part of the burden and to straightening out the blunders of others, he was one of God's gentlemen.

Another gentleman by nature, if not by birth, was Pete, a Swede, who had known and seen but little of life and accepted hard labour as his allotted portion, against which he never rebelled. There was a great gulf between us, because he could say only *yes* and *no* in English, and I could say nothing in his language, yet his serene nature and uncomplaining spirit were real contributions to me, who lacked both.

Then there came drifting in every few days new greenhorns, the flotsam and jetsam of the highway of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Some of them were bad, very bad. One, a degenerate Ger-

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man, even suggested that we kill the boss; yet on the whole they measured up well with the rest of humanity which I have touched in various strata of society. Indeed, they were a good deal more honest and straightforward than many respectable people, which was perfectly natural, for they were not playing a part and were not claiming to be anything they were not, or appearing to possess anything they had not.

While I have found human nature alike everywhere, I am inclined to say that down at the bottom, where I knew and touched it, one finds it fundamentally honest and kind.

The really bad person was Maria, the house-keeper. She stole from the boss and from us, all that was worth stealing. She was a genius at lying, yet she was kind to me, too kind, in fact, as I discovered later. She borrowed books from the boss's library, where they served as an ornament. There was a glorious set of Shakespeare in which I revelled on those Sundays when I had the leisure, and out of which there came a great uplift and a marvellous enrichment of my vocabulary.

Here too came to me like a baptism of the Spirit, the Essays of Emerson, and the chapter on "Compensation" I knew nearly all by heart. I surely needed its consoling philosophy.

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Of course I did not know every word I read, but it is marvellous how many gaps may be filled when one reads, even with such a limited vocabulary as I possessed.

Here I also discovered a poet now gone out of fashion—J. G. Holland. His simple, direct and somewhat didactic poems made a deep impression upon me, especially "Kathrina," which fitted well into my rather solemn mood. There comes to me now, loaded with fragrance, this stanza which then meant much to me:

"Oh! feed and fire me. Fill and furnish me,
And if thou hast for me some humble task,
Some service for thyself or for thy own,
Reveal it to thy sad, repentant child."

In return for Maria's numerous favours I had to read to her in German. One day the boss overheard my reading and came into the kitchen. Although he was angry because the books were taken from the library, he questioned me in regard to my past, and when I briefly told him my history, he promised to take me up to the University in the autumn and see what he could do for me.

Heinrich, the sailor, left us (as did many others) as soon as he discovered the pittance of wage he received at the end of a month. After

he left, Maria presented me with a pair of socks which I recognized as belonging to him. When I refused to take them she was very much offended, but made no difference in her treatment of me. The next event, however, had much to do with my not waiting for the autumn opening of the University.

As I recall it now, there was a lock on the canal, near that farm, and a little house on its shore in which the keeper lived. To this house Maria carried various farm products—chickens, eggs, etc.—and a number of times she employed me in the task. The lock keeper was an elderly German who had a dark-eyed, rather silly young wife and a boy whose name I remember, for it was Edward, like my own. Many an evening I heard the couple quarrel and the boatmen laughing at them. They seemed to me a tough crew and drink was very much in evidence.

One evening after dark Maria asked me to carry a pair of chickens to the house. When I reached it I heard violent quarrelling. The man threatened to kill the woman, and the boy cried piteously. I interfered and received—what often falls to the lot of the mediator—a bad beating. I did not leave the chickens, and in carrying them back, met the boss. When he questioned me I told him that Maria had sent me on the errand.

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When we returned to the house there was a stormy scene in the kitchen, and in the morning my lucky star had waned.

My coffee tasted like water, the milk was blue, the bread dry and the butter rancid. I was suddenly deposed from the place of favourite to that of the other labourers. At dinner I noticed a similar difference and in the evening I found that my chief comfort and consolation—the books—were gone.

The chance of coming in touch with the University in the Fall kept me at my post, although each day life grew more unbearable. Maria was a fiend at torture, and I suffered every kind of deprivation and indignity.

The next Sunday, not having any books to read, I strolled through the cornfield, down to the canal and past the little house, up the hill which leads to Princeton.

I do not know now at what point I reached the town, but I clearly remember the campus, at that time still delightfully and naturally old-fashioned and distinctly academic. It had a winning look and aroused all my old ambitions and desires. I was sure that somewhere I ought to be able to gain a foothold and climb again toward something worth reaching after.

The only public place open where I could ask

for information was a saloon. It may shock my Princeton friends to know that a saloon was open there on the Sabbath, but it was, whether front door or side door, I do not remember. I think that saloon was directly opposite the campus. It was rather handsomely furnished, and one or two rooms of which I had a glimpse reminded me of the old-fashioned Kneipe.

One thing which struck me most forcibly, but which I did not understand, although I had read Emerson and Shakespeare, was a sign over the bar on which was written:

“Minors not allowed here.”

I knew the Latin origin of the word, and I also had in mind the English word, *miner*. Thus early I did injustice to the spirit of Princeton whose life I first touched by way of a bar-room.

The bartender told me that it was vacation time and Sunday beside, and that the college office was closed, but said I might call on the president. I know I did not walk very far until I came to the president's house and with a fast beating heart rang the bell.

What if the president were to see me! What should I say? How could I explain my plight? Would he not drive me from the doorstep? I rang again and again, but there was no answer.

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In fact, that door was not opened to me until a quarter of a century afterwards; and before that I learned many, many things not found in the curriculum of Princeton University or any other.

IX

WESTWARD HO!

THE dignity of man's labour seems to have a boundary line where indignity begins. I think it lies somewhere in the mysterious region where his work ends and woman's work commences. I was especially sensitive at this period, and all manual tasks seemed more or less menial.

Work in the stable was always disagreeable, but I had reached the point where I could manage to do my various chores unaided. I harnessed the horses with less difficulty, and although ploughing corn was irksome, there was some exhilaration in it, especially when the task was finished.

Suddenly I was thrust from the stable into the kitchen, the sordid affairs of the cook being the cause. One morning on returning from my chores I found the kitchen cold and no breakfast awaiting us. Maria had fled with the lock keeper. They took many things not belonging to them and left behind the poor lad, whose mother also had disappeared with one of the bargemen. The child

came over to the house hungry and only partly dressed, and so we easily established the relation of the two fugitives.

Thus suddenly was I installed as nurse and cook. I had little difficulty with the boy, who was a very lovable child and made himself quite useful, but all the horrors of that unhappy period seemed to reach their climax when I had to cook.

I never felt that I had fallen quite so low as when I caught a glimpse of myself in the billowy mirror which hung over the wash basin. I scarcely recognized myself with a kitchen apron tied clumsily around me and the marks of my calling covering me from head to foot.

I had left my mother ignorant of the straits I was in, and had she seen me attempting to mix dough for biscuits or beat eggs into an omelette she would have wept, or more likely she might have laughed, for I must have been a ridiculous looking object.

I do not know how the men stood my kitchen *régime* as long as they did; but my joy was great when one morning the boss told me that he was going to the city to fetch a new cook. I took him to the station and was to meet him in the evening; in the meanwhile I was more than busy making the kitchen presentable for the new incumbent.

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I scrubbed the floor, the bitterest and most painful task I have ever done, and I am fully confident that in the curse of labour put upon our first parents, scrubbing floors was never intended for the more innocent man. I could not understand then, nor do I now, how a person can keep from being drowned in soapsuds, or how to clean the spot upon which one's body lies prostrate, when all around has been inundated. The floor was finally clean in spots, although the whole room seemed water-soaked and the atmosphere was full of moisture.

When the train came I was at the station. The boss alighted, and after a number of bandboxes had been handed down, a woman followed. The boss waived the formality of an introduction. The new comer seated herself beside me on the wagon and immediately I was enveloped in odours suggesting whiskey.

Maggie, as the boss called her, did not prove to be the blessing I had anticipated. She was a fiery-tempered Irishwoman, more often drunk than sober. One morning when her drunken sleep lasted longer than usual, the boss ordered me to the kitchen to take her place. When I refused, I was summarily dismissed.

Since then I have travelled that road with other greenhorns who have felt the cruelty of these

sweat farms, as I call them. I understand how they suffered, but I doubt that any of them were as near broken-hearted as I. My eyes were fixed on Princeton, and I believed that there lay my salvation.

Now I was again upon the road, homeless, with but ten dollars in my pocket, for the boss was not very generous with his wages. Before I left that region I once more climbed the hill to Princeton and rang the bell of the president's house. Again no door was opened, so I left the town and walked toward the West.

I had not gone very far when a peddler overtook me. He was a young Russian Jew who, by dispensing tinware among the farmers of New Jersey, was beginning to climb toward the capitalistic class. He pictured in glowing terms the pleasure and profit of his business and offered me a partnership in exchange for my capital. He sent me into a number of places to test my skill as a salesman, but I failed to sell a single piece of tinware and was much discouraged and very tired when we reached Trenton. We went to a German hotel and had supper together. Then I went to see the city. I remember standing before the Washington Monument and trying my fast growing knowledge of English on the inscription.

The next morning I was awakened to the fact that I was not destined to be a merchant prince. My partner had gone, leaving behind him the stock, but taking the entire capital of the new member of the firm. I carried the tinware from Trenton almost to Philadelphia, venturing into several places to offer it for sale, but without success. When I reached Philadelphia the next day I had a few dollars in my pocket, having sold all the stock of the late firm to the hotel keeper in a small town *en route*.

I arrived in the "City of Brotherly Love" about noon. I remember that the City Hall was in process of construction, which fact leaves the date of my arrival very uncertain, for that building was a long time being erected. I recall the fact that the gigantic figure of William Penn was safely poised upon its pinnacle, and that he looked down benignly upon me. I knew no one in Philadelphia and no one knew me. I walked miles and miles through the inner city, looking for one great treasure which I knew it held—the Liberty Bell. I am not easily affected by the sight of relics, but this bell which rang out freedom for a nation moved me mightily, although it stood mute upon its pedestal.

I felt enriched as I walked to the railroad station through those rather friendly streets with

their white stoops and quaint doorways. I do not remember how much money I had, but I staked it all upon a railroad ticket, westward.

Late at night the conductor came running to me and demanded to know why I did not get off at the last station which, he said, was my destination. I told him frankly that I really had no destination except to go West, as far as my money would carry me. At that he grew very angry and pulled the bell cord. The train stopped and he landed me rather roughly upon a lonely spot in the heart of the Keystone State.

That night, which I expected to spend under the stars, I slept in a feather bed and dreamed that I was at home again, that I could hear the murmur of the river and the watchman's blatant horn blowing solemnly the hours. When I awoke, although I was among strangers, I was enveloped by the home feeling, for I was among Christians of the most primitive type, who had opened to me their door that night and shown the most generous hospitality.

I was wakened by the man of the house. His queer garb, held together by hooks and eyes, astonished me, and his general appearance was certainly peculiar. He took me into the kitchen where the most generous breakfast I had ever seen covered the whole table. I remember vividly that the

pièce de résistance was apple pie, and it was never missing from any meal.

The mistress of the house was as gentle as her husband. There was an atmosphere of spiritual dignity about her, and although she could barely read and write, she was a cultured woman. She possessed a refinement of body and soul which only one school can impart--the school of service and renunciation--the school of the Cross. The children were young, reverent and obedient. I soon had them around me—which has always been a sort of triumph for me and still is.

It was the time of work in the tobacco fields, and I was engaged to help. Life in the home was somber and solemn, but it quite captivated me, although it was narrow and there was no window open toward the world. The long periods of Bible reading and prayer were often dull, but they were genuine. The father was the Priest of the Household, he ruled it justly and governed by kindness. The truth was spoken bluntly and the yea and nay were never qualified. To work beside that man was an inspiration, and we had many lively discussions upon religious subjects. I was in that unhappy period when faith was dissolved in a reckless sort of rationalism, and I boasted of my unbelief. He never grew angry and never reprobated me. I went with the family to the meet-

ing house, where I was enveloped by silence, where my soul was probed by the spirit, and I heard men and women speak of the power of religion over their lives.

I am sure Tolstoy would have been happy in that atmosphere. I often thought of him and talked about him to my employer and his friends.

As each day closed I felt it to have been a complete day. I worked hard, yet without dulling my intellect or degrading my spirit. I went to bed with the blessing of the household priest upon me and rose without fear of what the day would bring.

I am wondering why this type of religion which is not a religion of the church or temple, but of the home, is losing its hold. It seemed to me and still seems to me to be Christianity at its best. In fact, I do not believe that Christianity can survive unless the father again becomes the priest and the home the church and temple.

I am sure I should have stayed with these good people had they not been quite so removed from the world. I loved beauty, they shunned it; I was buoyant, happy and demonstrative, they were solemn and cold and frowned upon outer manifestations of joyousness; I had seen the world and found it good, they had not seen it and thought it evil; they were born upon the soil and loved it,

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while I was merely an hireling who worked for a wage and was waiting for the day of emancipation. Moreover, they had faith in God and I had none, although I did believe with all my heart in the goodness of humanity.

I left them late in the autumn, undecided what to do—whether to return East and try again to have the door at Princeton opened to me, or go West. There was a magic power in that phrase which lingered in my mind: "Go West, young man," and I succumbed to it.

My host blessed me as I left him.

"*Der Friede sei mit dir.*"

"Peace be with thee"; but I had a long and hard journey to take in the quest.

X

PITTSBURGH THEN AND NOW

IN Pittsburgh, rising above the Pennsylvania Railroad Station, is a splendid boulevard.

From this height one has a magnificent view of the winding river, the far-spreading, ill-shaped city and its houses clinging to the steep hillsides. On a clear day one may almost look into the flaming centre of those huge, craterlike steel mills which dot the landscape.

Not long ago I was taking this drive in a luxurious limousine. My friends were eager to point out the beauty spots, the superb residences with their far-stretching lawns, the churches and museums; but I knew too much of the great price paid for it all to joy therein.

Artists have been inspired by the dense clouds of smoke and huge pillars of fire reflected in the murky river; but to me it is a vast, confused battlefield, without order and without beauty.

As we glided on in the softly cushioned car, I studied the outline of the river and imagined I could see the very mill in which I worked some twenty-eight years ago. I am told that it is one

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of Mr. Carnegie's oldest plants. I did not know then that I was helping to lay the foundations of a colossal fortune, to be used in many splendid ways for the public good; for at that time I was merely one of the "cattle," as a certain "captain of industry" expressed it the very day of the drive.

It was such a day as this of my recent motor ride when I first saw Pittsburgh, and as we rolled along I recalled it in a dim sort of way. The moisture turned to snow, and the snow to slush, a wet, smoky curtain hung above, making the air cold and chill. Only then I had no fur-lined overcoat, and being one of the "cattle," I was not taken about in a limousine.

The first time I arrived in Pittsburgh I remember crawling over the muddy bank of a river into a chaotic street, looking for an Employment Agency and a job—a gentleman's job, if possible. But Pittsburgh had as little use for my treatise on philology as New York had, and before all my money was exhausted I was at work in a steel mill.

Fortunately, in those days the system of speeding had not yet developed to the point when it was known exactly how many movements of the body are necessary to accomplish a certain task. I know, though, that for half a day, out in a bleak, stock-

aded yard I grappled with countless bars of crude iron; that I strained and lifted and released them, doing what I was bid to do, not knowing what ends my labour served.

When noon came, my back was so sore that I could not straighten it, and my fingers were torn and bleeding. The foreman saw that I could not stand the strain of the task, and in the afternoon put me at much easier, if more dangerous work in the mill.

I merely pushed a huge, hot caldron from a room in which the temperature was over two hundred, into a broad, cold shed, thus travelling constantly between the equator and the polar regions. I believe I suffered no serious discomfort; for I was young and life's juices were running full. It was a hard job, nevertheless, and as it grew colder I often had the experience of my hands being parched from heat while my feet were nearly frozen.

Although this work was fatiguing, it was not as monotonous as it sounds. I saw the gigantic smelters, while the golden glow of molten metal, with its ever changing, wonderful colours, appealed to my artistic sense, and I really enjoyed chatting with the burly men who stood guard over the fires.

The end of the day, when the work was over,

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proved, after all, the hardest period. All my senses seemed to go to sleep at once as soon as the strain was over, and then, indeed, I was just one of the "cattle"—a dull, dumb brute, ready to be fed and lie down to sleep. The worst feature of this type of physical labour is not that it is hard and dangerous. Both facts bring a certain exaltation, but it is the complete exhaustion which follows the long hours, and the dullness which finally creeps into a man's mind and soul.

On the recent day of which I have spoken, at a noon conference and luncheon in which this subject was discussed, an employer of labour was quoted as saying that it is useless to try to do anything for these people, for they do not appreciate it and do not use opportunities which are offered them. That, unfortunately, is sad truth in many cases. If, at the close of a ten hour day's work in a steel mill I had been offered a ticket to a Symphony concert or, in fact, anything except a good supper and a bed, I would not have accepted it; although my mind and soul were still hungry for the best things, and I was sure I must climb out of the pit.

Worse, however, than the hard work and long hours is the boarding house, an institution which has grown worse rather than better in these later

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days. The crowded, stuffy rooms, the unaired beds and the unrelieved ugliness of the surroundings are a poor preparation for the next day's work. I am sure that it would increase the efficiency of the worker if these boarding houses were supervised, with a view to the men's health and comfort.

It is not true that men *choose* to live as they do in Pittsburgh. Wherever an honest effort has been made to provide better accommodations, and foresight has been exercised explaining the more complicated machinery of our civilization—such as closets and baths—they have been eagerly accepted. Very often these "cattle" have gladly paid their hard-earned money for such commodities.

In a number of cases I have advised baths properly placed in boarding houses, and invariably I was met by this accepted theory, that the men are but cattle and their standard of living so low that they do not care for a bath. Yet in nearly all cases where my advice was followed, the bathing capacity had to be increased.

This is true of every experiment which has been made for the improvement of housing conditions, although of course patience had to be exercised and an educational propaganda inaugurated.

The American people have taken it for granted that a standard of living is a biological inheritance, and that in the Divine economy the American was born with a passion for Colonial houses, automobiles and soap and water, while the immigrant came into the world fond of hovels, dirt and wheelbarrows. The American forgets that the average boy, even though he have a long ancestry used to an abundance of soap and water, has to go through a painful period of apprenticeship. Many of my readers will remember, no doubt, that before the daily bath was deemed a necessity, the thought of the weekly or semi-weekly scrubbing brought anything but joy in its anticipation.

A standard of living is dependent upon certain economic factors, and upon the standard maintained within the group in which one has been placed, and much which we accept as essential to our well-being is, like the eating of olives, to many people an acquired taste.

There is a serious complaint in Pittsburgh and its vicinity that the working men look with suspicion upon any phase of welfare work instituted by employers of labour. This suspicion is justified and for good reasons.

Steel mill corporations and mining companies have never been known to be benevolently inclined, and the agencies they have fostered in

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their camps and patches have been used for the exploitation of the workers.

That execrable institution, the Company Store, flourishes in Pennsylvania, and, contrary to the law, there is a compulsion put upon the workers to buy provisions from their employers.

Very casually, without the slightest twinge of conscience, a coal operator told me that hucksters and peddlers are not permitted in his camp, and that his foreman has orders to drive away, if need be with a gun, the delivery wagon of the independent grocer.

The experiences of the miners in Westmoreland County have not increased their confidence in their employers. Everything was capitalized for the benefit of the employer, even the water they drank. Incredible as it may sound, I have it upon indisputable authority that drinking water was refused to fever-stricken miners and to women in childbirth because there was a strike on.

Small wonder, then, that every dole dealt is looked upon as if it were a baited trap, and it will be a long time before suspicion is replaced by confidence.

True, there is a change of attitude toward these "cattle"; but in many cases it arises from fear of their awakened strength, rather than from any confidence in them or love for them.

It was a bitter winter for me in that steel mill in Pittsburgh; not so much because of the hard labour and the small wage, as because of my utter isolation and the fact that no man had faith in me and in my kind. Conditions are different now, and if I have had any share in making them so, then I rejoice in my suffering.

For a quarter of a century in Pittsburgh and around it, where men have crowded these "cattle" and used them and bruised them, I have said that they have large human value; but no one would believe it. Gradually, though, even Pittsburgh is waking to the fact that there *are* human values in these crude folk, and that all they need is the opportunity to develop them. Just as they are beginning to pick wealth from the heaps of refuse at the mouth of the mine, so the glint of gold is appearing among the masses of these men, and my predictions regarding them are being fulfilled.

It took a long time and it came in a very roundabout way. Five years ago I said to the Y.M.C.A. of Pennsylvania: "Give me your best young men and let me take them to the homes of these people across the ocean. Let them see these 'cattle' under normal conditions, let them live in their homes and touch them in their daily lives, see the best and the worst of them

and learn a few snatches of their speech, so that they may be able to unlock the closed doors of mind and heart."

I took six men with me and we travelled through the whole of the immigrant territory together. It was an itinerant sort of university. We studied the history and language of the people, we slept in their homes and ate their food, played with their boys and girls, learned to sing their songs and taught them ours. Then the men returned to this country.

Located in Pittsburgh is Harlow McConaughay, who interprets to the foreigners in his own personality the best type of American. As his name indicates, he is Irish, having retained the Celt's enthusiasm and good nature, and combining with it the Yankee's ability and good sense. He interprets to the people of Pittsburgh the values he has found in the men who toil for them and whom they have always regarded as "cattle." He is the mediator between the two, having the full confidence of both. He teaches English, hygiene and good citizenship to the foreigners and respect and love for them to the Americans.

He has gained the full confidence of the foreign press, which co-operates with him. The foreign clergy, always the hardest to reach, has, in many cases, yielded to his genuine appeal. The fact that

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he has been abroad and has gained a sympathetic insight into the life there, helps him not a little.

One of his recent experiences illustrates this point. In trying to establish schools for the teaching of English he came to a district dominated by the Roman Catholic Church and its young, inexperienced Slovak priest.

He did not understand the English appeal and suspected that Mr. McConaughey was an officer of the law. At the psychological moment this Irish-American told the priest in Slovak that he had been in his country and in the town in which he was born. Immediately the contact was made and the permission readily granted.

In a similar way at Wilmerding, a suburb of Pittsburgh, another one of my "boys," as I love to call them, Mr. E. E. Bohner, has established a Welfare Club, modelled after the Y.M.C.A. In this organization a dozen nationalities are brothered and are growing, not only toward a higher standard of living, but also toward a higher conception of citizenship and manhood. Mr. Bohner, too, is a typical American of mixed ancestry in which Pennsylvania Dutch predominates.

Genuinely human and in love with all that is human, he has become the brother of Serbs, Croatians, Italians and Poles, until the Welfare Club, with its whole queer mixture, is like a great

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smelter for the refining of dross and the unifying of various elements. Its brass band keeps in tune, although nearly each instrument is played by a man of a different nationality.

Thus the whole discordant life of this industrial community is brought into harmony, because one man has learned that these people are brothers and will respond to the best that is offered them, if it comes in the spirit of the unselfish Christ.

What is being done by these men and other agencies is, after all, very little; but a beginning has been made. Pittsburgh is learning to take note of the stranger within its gates, and my faith in my brothers of the steel mills is being vindicated.

XI

JUSTIFIED FAITH

NOWHERE have I found humanity in a worse state than in the Pittsburgh boarding house, where I was one of twenty who shared two living-rooms, in which there was not the simplest appliance for the common decencies.

In fact, it did seem to me many a time that we were just "cattle," for life was merely, as one of them expressed it, "work, eat, drink, getta drunk, go to sleep."

Many of the men had to work seven days in the week, and although by that they were often saved the Sunday "drunk" and fight, the monotony and grind of the ceaseless drudgery were as deadening and degrading as the weekly spree might have been. At that time the immigrant had not yet brought with him his priest and his church, so that Sunday was not the call to his soul which it has now become.

The appeals to decency were heeded, especially when they meant following American standards, many of which I brought the men from the larger world that I touched through the newspapers.

Unfortunately, following American standards meant to most of us the standards of the group immediately above us. In this case it was made up of a tough class of Irishmen who were the skilled labourers whom we were displacing at the coarser work.

The first American exercise which crept into the boarding house was boxing. I had no small share in developing the science of fighting, and the one American name which came most frequently to our lips was John L. Sullivan, at that time the rising star in the fistic firmament.

To the more progressive among us the saloon became a source of attraction. It was, in fact, the only place open to us which brought us in touch with the life and standards of the class whose former places we were occupying. I owe it to my innate distaste for alcohol and to the high ideals of my youth, not quite gone to sleep, that I did not embark in the saloon business.

I had a fine offer from a German saloonkeeper to start a branch establishment. He expatiated in alluring terms upon the advantages of the business, but I remained firm in my refusal to accept his offer.

It is characteristic of the tendency to imitate the displaced group, that certain Slovaks and Poles dress in ultra-American fashion, hang around the

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saloons and become generally sporty. In Pittsburgh to this day they are called Irish Slovaks or Irish Polaks.

Gradually the immigrant learns to distinguish between the lower and higher type of American, and at the present time my contemporaries of that Pittsburgh period are under the sway of the best American ideals.

The Slavonic National Society, formed twenty-three years ago, has contributed a great deal toward that end, and its Year-Book, recently published, marks the distance which these pioneers have travelled in less than a quarter of a century. Unfortunately, it is in the Slovak language, else it might be reviewed by Pittsburgh papers. If it were, I am confident that it would be declared the best literary output of that rather materialistic city.

It is a pleasure to look at the artistic cover, and although the advertisements which follow are largely for saloons, patent medicine vendors and banks, the varying and growing needs of these people are shown by the announcements of merchant tailors, land agents, schools for the study of English, flag and badge makers. The advertisements for artificial limbs call attention to the dangerous occupations in which they engage. Many of the illustrations are copies of Slovak art and

are splendid reproductions in colour. It would be a distinct shock to my Pittsburgh friends to know that these common folk appreciate the fine pictures which their brothers have painted and that they read poetry which their bards have written for them. I am not praising the book because the editor has given the place of honour to an appreciation of my work for the Slovak people, yet it gratifies me more than any other such expression I have ever received.

Many pages are devoted to a civic catechism which is admirable, but the article which impresses me most is one on "Etikette" in America. Imagine, if you can, my fellow-labourers in Mr. Carnegie's steel mill studying American etiquette.

"Miss Hancis, permit me to introduce Mr. Klobuk."

Then Mr. Klobuk is told that he must say:

"It gives me great pleasure to meet you." Should he not quite get the name, he is instructed to say:

"I beg your pardon, I did not catch the name."

Mr. Klobuk is also told that he must not introduce to his sister any man who does not have a good reputation or one of poor character, for it would be very disagreeable to Miss Klobuk to have to recognize such a man on the street. He is also enlightened regarding the sacred cere-

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monial of the daily meeting, Good-morning, Good-day and Good-evening.

"It is not nice for a young man to stop a young lady on the street and talk to her for any length of time, for it might reflect upon her character. Moreover, a man must not greet a lady on the street. In America it is her prerogative to recognize a man or not, as she chooses.

"In shaking hands with a lady, should you not have time to remove your glove, you must say, 'Excuse my glove.' Never give the lady your left hand; with that you lift your hat and with the other you shake her hand."

"A fashionable call is not to exceed half an hour."

"A married lady must not invite men to her home unless her husband is there."

Then comes a chapter on behaviour at the table, and mark it, you superior people of Pittsburgh, your Slovak immigrants are told that they must drink their coffee out of their cups, not out of their saucers, for it is "very, very ugly to do that"; and "Please do not blow your hot coffee or soup; give it time to cool." "Do not make a noise when you eat your meat and do not eat your pie with a knife." "Do not take your potato in your hand to peel it." "Do not reach across the table, but say: 'Please pass the butter,' and if you

should have to leave the table before others have finished say: "Please excuse me."

"How to Behave on the Street" is a chapter I should like to translate in its entirety for the superior *native* race in Pittsburgh and out of it.

Mr. Klobuk is told that he must not walk with his hands in his pockets nor must more than two walk together on a narrow sidewalk so as to obstruct the street. If the sidewalk is wide enough three might walk on it abreast, but invariably they must break ranks if they are met by some one going in another direction.

Lastly, the new-comer is told about his clothes, what to wear and how to take care of it and, what is very important, he is told that handkerchiefs are cheap in America and that they are to be used.

But the distance the immigrant has travelled toward the higher culture is best demonstrated to the general American public by the annual Singing Contest which takes place in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall. It was organized by the Y.M.C.A. of Pittsburgh and on one occasion I was the guest and speaker.

The contestants were late in arriving, for to wash away the grime of the mine and shop and make one's self presentable for so momentous an occasion takes time.

Unfortunately, the singers do not appear in their national costume, while many of them come in evening dress, shaven and shorn, one group not easily distinguished from the other or from the audience of Americans assembled.

The contest was begun by Swedish singers who, long-headed, fair-haired, well groomed, contrasted strongly with their darker complexioned competitors. Their voices blend admirably, for they have a long experience in singing together. Their range is rather high and their songs seemed to float over their lips as do the mists and fogs over their sea-circled land.

Very different were the Russians who followed them. Huge, stocky fellows they were, upon whose muscular bodies their small round heads sat disproportionately. In sad, melancholy tones, in deep, guttural voices they sang in a minor key of the ploughman's task and the riverman's dangerous journey down the Volga. The applause which followed was not as generous as that which followed the song of the Swedes, for the Russians' music was understood and appreciated only by their countrymen, who sat scattered through the large auditorium.

The Poles came with heavy tread upon the platform. Smaller and more gracefully built than the Russians, they sang as they had fought—with

grim determination. What can the Poles sing about but Poland's past, Poland's hopes, of foes worsted in bitter wars and of Poland's rising glory above its threefold enemies?

The Ruthenians were the greatest surprise to me. They are among the latest comers to Pittsburgh and do the most menial tasks. With no national past to buoy them, no national hopes to dream about, they drew upon the rich treasures of their folk song and sang much more sweetly and effectively than their Slav competitors.

The Slovaks came next. Shades of the past! Is it possible! Slovaks, my Slovaks of the Pittsburgh boarding house, in evening dress, pitching their tune accurately and singing the songs of the young Slovak poets so admirably that even those who could not feel the beauty of the words or quite tune themselves to the strange harmony, applauded generously.

The Croatians were no less a surprise, for to the Americans they had been merely another group of "Hunkies"; but as the audience saw the finely cut features of these men and the distinct marks of culture in their bearing, it applauded even before they sang a single line. When their song, rising like a cataract, died away like the ripple of a gentle brook, the enthusiasm knew no bounds.

A soloist next appeared, a Miss Fabry of Slovak birth and most excellent training. She is the best type of Slavonic womanhood—dark, with deep-set large eyes. Gracefully built and simply and tastefully gowned, she sang the cradle song of the Slovak mothers, the wedding song of the bridesmaid and the lament of the suffering heart which had lost its treasure.

I venture to say that rarely has Pittsburgh heard a song more really sung, not coming merely from throat and lip, but from down in the heart. Miss Fabry's singing did what only truly great art can accomplish. It aroused an enthusiasm which was not merely the recognition of a superb artist, but a tribute to human nature. In its appreciation of this artist, the mixture of nationalities and races knew itself as one human family and was proud, not of the Slav, Latin or Scandinavian blood, but proud that the human could rise to such superb heights, and all were blended into unity by the great gift of song.

The Slovaks sent Miss Fabry a floral offering, but the messenger, not understanding American etiquette, brought the box of flowers, wrapped and tied, and was about to present it to the singer in that form, when one of those Americans who always knows what to do and how to do it, rose from his seat, walked up to the stage, untied the

package and presented the roses to the grateful artist.

Nine nationalities contested for the prizes, an American flag and a portrait of the Father of our Country.

It was difficult to address this audience, not only because it had been on the mountain top above which no speech could carry it, but because I remembered my boarding house life in Pittsburgh and the great distance we had all travelled in the quarter of a century. I do not know what I said, but I felt like kneeling down and thanking God for my confidence in my fellow men and for this country; for the opportunity it gives us all to rise from the pit of the mine and from the burning furnaces to the full glory of manhood.

To close the meeting we all sang together, "My Country, 'tis of Thee" They had been singing in groups, each the notes and thoughts bequeathed him by his Fatherland—the songs of conquest, of national aspiration, of love and hate. Now we sang the common hymn of a grateful people, and as we sang, "Our Father's God to Thee," I felt my faith in the human—even as I knew it in the boarding house—justified, and I left the hall as if walking on clouds.

XII

IN DARKEST PITTSBURGH

THAT hard winter in Pittsburgh ceased as suddenly as it had begun. A torrential rain driven by warm winds swelled the rivers; against the piers of the bridge were piled great cakes of ice which gradually extended like a fortress, while the water rose higher and higher, until it crept over the banks and rushed through the streets, seeking its level. The fires in the mill were quenched, the gates were closed and my career in the steel mill ended.

I had saved over one hundred dollars, which was a great gain, of course, but I had also lost much; for the English which I had acquired was unused. Neither did I enter a church; for on many of the Sundays I worked, and on the days when I had a respite I was too tired to do anything except write a letter home or delve into that marvellous compilation of inane nothings, the Sunday newspaper.

With the patrons of a German saloon on Smithfield Street I had some social contact, which lifted me a bit above my boarding house life; but

nothing happened there to stir me to a realization of the fact that I was going downward.

One rather strong impression was left upon me through my contact with this saloon, namely: that all reformers were hypocrites and that the W.C.T.U. was an association of married women who shirked their home duties and of old maids who had no home duties to shirk—nothing to do but meddle with the affairs of others.

I saw the people of Pittsburgh painted in blue, Puritanic colours, and I became firmly convinced that the main business of the churches was to repress all human joy.

It seemed very strange to me that the church people were eager to close saloons when the factories and mills were always open. In my estimation the height of fanaticism was reached when I realized that on Sunday all places of amusement had to be closed and that boys were arrested for playing ball on that day.

Under the very foundations of the churches where protesting congregations condemned Sunday pleasures, Sunday labour was going on in the dark, damp mines. After six days of monotonous, unrelieved toil, on the seventh day, tens of thousands of men were permitted to lift hot iron and steel bars; while young boys, who laboured all the week and were permitted to rest the seventh day,

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were arrested for engaging in what seemed to me a perfectly innocent game.

The good people of Pittsburgh, especially their ministers, wonder at the attitude of foreign workmen toward them and their Sabbatarian ideals. They do not realize that their own attitude looks to the workmen decidedly queer and distorted.

While the churches of Pittsburgh did stop Sunday baseball and kept the front doors of the saloons closed—to this day they have not stopped the unnecessary waste of labour and of life.

Among my associates of that early day every activity of the church was held up to ridicule, and I remember quite clearly the unpleasant impression made upon me, when I read that the churches of Pittsburgh had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to send missionaries to foreign lands; for I saw what they did not realize—that in their midst decent people were being brutalized and religious ideals crushed by overwork, underpay and wretched housing conditions.

Never shall I forget my attempt to get a bath in Pittsburgh. That there was none to be had in our boarding house did not seem strange, for the bathroom is a comfort found in comparatively few European homes; that there was no municipal or public bath which any one might enjoy for money, I could not understand. The condition

of our bodies can be imagined when one considers the nature of our work, the temperature in the mills and the state of the atmosphere in Pittsburgh. I do not care to recall just how long I went without a bath, but I do wish to point out the difficulties under which the immigrant labours, or did labour, in trying to get one.

I knew, of course, that b-a-t-h meant bath, but in none of the better class barber shops where one could be obtained, was I permitted to purchase cleanliness when I asked the privilege.

After much screwing up of courage, I entered a mean looking shop in which men of my standing could buy this luxury. The bathroom was behind a thin wall, partitioned off from the barber shop; the woodwork was dirty and decayed, and the filth of the tub beyond all description. In those days it must have taken no little courage to bathe in Pittsburgh water, even where the accessories were acceptable; but in that basement barber shop among unspeakable stenches, it seemed to me more sanitary not to bathe. However, true to my early training and a natural desire for cleanliness, I made a desperate effort to scrub the tub, but in vain. Finally, sickened by the dirt and the unnamable odours, I left the barber shop minus twenty-five cents and also minus the bath.

There were places of all sorts and kinds and in

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conspicuous locations provided, for satisfying the lowest passions of men, but a public bath was one of the things which, if it existed, never came to our notice.

That was a dreary spring, for not only was there no work, the flooded cesspools and choked sewers bred pestilence, and our boarding house held a mixture of contagious diseases, of which smallpox was the worst.

Perhaps because the hospitals were crowded or because we were isolated by the flood or because we were "just cattle," none of the patients could be removed. Instead, a quarantine was placed against our house, and we were virtually prisoners.

Two of the men died. They were of the Greek Orthodox faith, but under existing conditions we could make no efforts to find a priest. Fortunately, I could read the prayers of their church for them, and as they craved absolution from their sins before they died, I granted them forgiveness in the name of the Triune God in whom I did not profess belief. I had even mocked their crude superstitions and gloried in my enthroned reason; but in the presence of death I was down to their level, or perhaps I should say, I rose to their height. I became a priest against my will, anointed by the laying on of the hands of the dying.

At night came health officers covered by car-

bolic acid soaked sheets. They looked like ghosts as they carried away our comrades, to rest in the potter's field.

Our boarding house and others like it became a menace to the neighbourhood, for the disease germs washed down the hillsides into the river, and death lurked in every drop of water the city consumed.

Pittsburgh seemed not to learn anything from this costly experience. It was the time when the growth and the wealth of cities were put above the weal of those who toiled to make them great and rich. The newspapers were silent, and who would have heard the complaints of mere "*Hunkies*"?

I know that the city had to be scourged many a time, until disease and death climbed out of the bottoms, unsatisfied by their harvest, and reached up to the hillsides where the masters lived. When the darlings of great fortunes were stricken, Pittsburgh wakened to the fact that it was face to face with a health problem.

When it had health inspectors and struggled for some measure of well-being in tenements, shops and mines, another disease fastened upon its community life, a disease quite indigenous to American cities and commonly called "graft."

It has taken Pittsburgh many years to discover

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that graft is not merely a matter of men's putting public money into their private pockets, but that graft means a polluted water supply, ineffective health and mine inspection, disease-breeding tenements.

It is just beginning to understand that hardest of all the sayings of Jesus—hard enough for the individual, harder still for the collective mind to grasp. "For what doth it profit a man"—or a city—"if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

XIII

FROM STEEL TO COAL

THE perplexing problem of the distribution of immigrants solves itself to a more or less satisfactory degree by the demand for their labour.

Many of the racial groups instinctively follow the paths worn by their predecessors. Thus when they are "cast out of one city" they "flee unto another," sure of finding numbers of their countrymen and a chance at the same hard labour in which they were engaged.

From Pittsburgh the beaten path led to Connellsville; from steel to coal. Those who had not acquired the agility or the boldness to jump freight trains walked along the track; that is, if, like myself, they left Pittsburgh, the city of millionaires, practically penniless.

I took neither "scrip nor staff," yet I was not quite within the Apostolic rule, for I carried a revolver which, with a prayer-book, was bequeathed me by the dying men in the boarding house.

Inasmuch as the revolver cost me six months of

freedom, it would have been better for me if I had left Pittsburgh with only the Apostolic equipment.

The way out of the city was difficult, for I had to find the right tracks among a perfect maze of rails. It was a perilous and tedious task which consumed the greater part of a morning. I do not know how long it took me to reach Connellsville. I have painful memories of a long, cold, damp day, of shoes which admitted the oozing slush, dangerous trestles to cross, and weary, hungry night hours. I recall the evening sky luridly coloured by the light of gaseous flames from lines of mysterious watch fires which stretched along the valley. Half naked men and women tended these fires and had neither time nor spirit to answer my greetings or give me directions on the way.

Faintly, very faintly, do I remember hard words spoken, threatening gestures and doors shut in my face.

Most vividly do I recollect one wrinkled face, hardened and wizened, yet it shines through all these years—like Rembrandt's portrait of an old woman—all the mellow light concentrated upon the features, changing each ugly spot and wrinkle into beauty.

It was very late at night when I reached the outskirts of Connellsville, and the red and green lights in the yards were constantly changing. On

every track were cars full of coke, and in my attempt to get out of the way of a switching train I slid down an embankment and literally fell into the house where this old woman was washing clothes.

"*Boze muy!*" she exclaimed at the sight of her unexpected guest, as with hands which dripped soapsuds she helped me get to my feet. Without waiting to hear my story, she brought me some supper, my first meal that day.

It was just *sauerkraut*, hot, fortunately, and I shall never forget how good it tasted. Even now, after my palate has been jaded by the delicacies of both the Occident and the Orient, I remember the infusion of strength, the return of hope and the increase even of faith which came with that plebeian dish, served in the homeliest way—graced only by the pity which gave it.

The old woman's "man" was at work, for he was one of the priests of the Coke and Steel Company, and nightly tended their sacred fires. Her son-in-law and her daughter were asleep with the numerous children.

She made me lie down in her bed while she kept on washing clothes, how long into the night I do not know.

When I awoke the old man was lying by my side; he had not undressed himself, nor was he

washed. A black, ugly, inhuman, snoring thing he seemed as he lay upon the dirty bed, and lingering about him was the smell of soapsuds, of new and old cooking, of body sweats and other odours past analysis.

The room was full of the noise of switching engines, crashing freight cars and the prattle of children; the cries of young babies and the curses of tired men, poisoned by overwork and alcohol; the chatter of women, hucksters calling out their wares and the reverberation of powder blasts; yet the tired old man slept on.

I ate breakfast with the son-in-law. There were hot, steaming coffee with sugar and milk, black bread and butter and fried pork—a sumptuous breakfast indeed for that Polish peasant. While we ate he made me an offer, and soon we sealed the compact by which I became his helper in the mine at a dollar a day.

On the way to work I bought my outfit on credit. A pickax, shovel and a miner's uniform, consisting of an overall suit, cap and heavy boots. I think I felt something like pride as I put them on, the pride of a soldier. I also felt a soldier's fear as we walked across the network of tracks, dodged strings of moving cars, entered the cage and waited for the signal to descend. I never had much physical courage, in fact, I was what men

call a coward. I always had to summon to my aid at such a time something of a moral prop to hold me.

I grew dizzy, cold perspiration covered my body, and when the sharp tone of the gong rang out, I think I must have felt like a condemned man when the fatal moment comes.

The day was raw and cold, and the sun struggled with the haze and smoke which hung over the valley. Suddenly it grew warmer and darker, the little lamps on our caps sent a dim halo about our heads and all was silent except for the grinding of wheels somewhere and the friction of the rope which held the cage.

It was a world of men and mules into which we descended. Toiling men and mules, and the men had the advantage, for they could swear at the mules, and beat them. However, the mules could reciprocate in their own fashion, all but the swearing.

I stumbled over tracks and switches, much to the amusement of the gang which was moving in a certain direction to its daily task.

At last my "boss" reached the chamber in which we were to work. He too was new at his job, and the Irish foreman with much ill humour gave us certain directions which I did not understand. Then came hours of drilling into

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the unresponsive earth, hole after hole, into each of which we poured black powder whose nature I did not guess. After that I was told to run, and the earth shook, my throat and nostrils were almost sealed by smoke, and the battle was on.

I shovelled coal and lifted it into numerous cars which came and went, drawn by blinking mules, driven by tobacco chewing, reckless, cursing lads who called us names which, fortunately, were unintelligible, to me at least.

It was night when we reached the top, the upper crust where men could walk erect, breathe less polluted air and look at the stars, or do that less poetic thing which we did—go to the saloon, stand in front of the bar like real human beings and order the barkeeper to give us whiskey. The men drank to my health (at my expense) in honour of my having become a miner's helper.

That long row of saloons in Connellsburg still stands, and youths such as I was then are in front of the bars indulging in their only solace—biting, vicious alcohol.

I walked that street nearly a quarter of a century after I first entered it and saw the very saloon into which my "boss" led me when he drank to my health, and I even found the hut to

which I returned after my first day's labour underground.

I walked that street the same hour of the night with my dear friend Robert Watchorn, then Commissioner of Immigration at the port of New York, and I told him the events of those days, even as he had told me of his own struggles as a coal miner in that same region.

We were jostled by half-drunk boys who had purchased elation of spirit at too great a price, and were seeking a wretched by-street to purchase there the base counterfeit of a woman's love. We said to each other, "By Grace are we saved," and praying as we walked, we pledged ourselves to help stir the conscience of the community so that the immigrant lads might find real friends outside the brothel and the saloon, instead of false friends inside them.

That night both of us spoke before the state convention of the Y.M.C.A., and from it came the pledge of money for the first real effort to train men especially for social service among immigrants.

The first night of my career as a miner, when my employer and I came back to the hut, the children were all asleep and the old woman was again washing. The wife of the boss was cooking supper, and for a greeting he cursed her and threat-

ened to beat her. Why, I did not know, nor did they either, I think. Perhaps because all around them were evil and degradation.

The old man had gone to watch the fires, and after supper I went to bed. Too tired to undress, I think I was asleep before I lay down. In the morning the dirty, snoring old man was lying by my side grinding his teeth in his sleep and muttering something like a curse. I never saw him awake.

The next day and the next brought just the same monotonous round; every evening after the day's labour the boss took me to the saloon where he continued to drink my health at my expense. On Saturday night he paid me, deducting my board and the amount of my debt to the saloon-keeper. That night he lingered longer than usual in the bar-room and got into a fight. I visited the stores, investing in clean linen the little money I had left.

The next week was like the preceding one except that it grew difficult to go to work; men who spoke English tried to restrain us, for there was a strike. On the fourth day of that week as we reached the top of the mine we were greeted by curses and flying lumps of coal and had to run for our lives.

In the morning we found the mine surrounded

by soldiers, and before we reached the encircling guards we were set upon by a group of men, some of whom flourished sticks, while others carried guns.

We ran toward the mine, the guard charged the strikers and shots were fired on both sides. I stopped behind a sheltering water tank when a moving mass of men came in my direction. I was seized, beaten and left insensible upon the ground.

When I woke I found myself on an iron cot in a narrow cell with my head bandaged. I rose and limped to the door, which I found locked, for I was imprisoned in the county jail.

XIV

THE CRIMINAL IMMIGRANT

TO recall prison experience, is not pleasant, and would not be profitable, if this were merely a narration of what happened to one individual, a quarter of a century ago. Conditions are not sufficiently changed, either in judicial procedure or in methods of punishment, to make this account of *historic* importance. Its value lies only in the fact that *no changes* have occurred, and that my experience then is still the common fate of multitudes of immigrants, who swell the criminal records of their race or group, and are therefore looked upon with dislike and apprehension.

The jail in which I found myself was an unredeemed, vermin-infested building, crowded by a motley multitude of strikers and strike breakers; bitter enemies all, their animosity begotten in the elemental struggle for bread, and hating one another with an unmodified, primitive passion.

The strikers had the advantage over us, for they were more numerous and were acquainted with the ways of American officials. This gave them

the opportunity (which they improved) to make it unpleasant for the "Hunkies."

The straw mattress upon which I slept the first night was missing the second; salt more completely spoiled the mixture called by courtesy coffee, and the only thing which saved me from bodily hurt was the fact that there was no spot on me which was not already suffering.

I mention without malice and merely as a fact in race psychology, that the Irish were the most cruel to us, with the Germans a close second, while the Welsh were not only inoffensive, but sometimes kind.

One of them, David Hill, smaller than the ordinary Welshman, but with the courage of his Biblical namesake—stood between me and a burly Irish Goliath who wanted to thrash this particular "furriner, who came over here to take away the bread from the lips of *dacent, law-abiding Americans.*"

The jailer maintained no discipline and heeded no complaints. His task was to keep us locked up; the bars were strong and the key invariably turned.

The strikers gradually drifted from the jail, being bailed out or released, and I was not sorry to see them go.

Poor food, vermin of many varieties and the

various small tortures endured, were all as nothing to me compared with the fact that for more than six weeks I was permitted to be in that jail without a hearing: without even the slightest knowledge on my part as to why I had forfeited my liberty.

From the barred jail window I could see workmen going unhindered to their tasks; on Sunday pastor and people passed, as they went to worship their Lord who, too, was once a prisoner. None, seemingly, gave us a thought or even responded by a smile to the hunger for sympathy which I know my face must have expressed.

My letters to the Austro-Hungarian Consul remained unanswered, and the jailer gave my repeated questionings only oaths for reply.

The day of my hearing finally came, and I was dragged before the judge. The proceedings were shockingly disorderly, irreverent and unjust. I was charged with shooting to kill. The weapon which had been found in my pocket was the revolver bequeathed me by the dying man in the Pittsburgh boarding house. As all its six cartridges were safely embedded in rust, the charge was changed to "carrying concealed weapons." I think my readers will agree with me that the sentence of one hundred dollars fine and three months in the county jail, was out of all proportion to the offence.

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The court wasted exactly ten minutes on my case and then I was returned to my quarters in the jail, an accredited prisoner. Let me here record the fact that I carried back to my cell a fierce sense of injustice and a contempt for the laws of this land and its officials; feelings that later ripened into active sympathy with anarchy, which at that time occupied the attention of the American people. My knowledge of that subject came to me through old newspapers which drifted as waste around the jail.

In all those months, more than six, for my fine had to be worked out, or rather idled out, no one came to me to comfort or explain. For more than six months I was with thugs, tramps, thieves and vermin. I was a criminal immigrant, a component element of the new immigration problem.

I recall all this now in no spirit of vengeance; as far as my memory is concerned, I have purged it of all hate. I recall my experience because those same conditions exist to-day in more aggravated form; while multitudes of ignorant, innocent men suffer and die in our jails and penitentiaries.

Since then I have visited most of the county jails, prisons and penitentiaries in which immigrants are likely to be found. Intelligent and humane wardens, of whom there are a few, have

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told me that more than half the alien prisoners are suffering innocently, from transgressing laws of which they were ignorant, and that their punishment is too often much more severe than necessary.

The following narration of several incidents which recently came under my observation will be pardoned, I hope, when their full import is seen.

Not long ago I went to lecture in a Kansas town; one of those irreproachable communities in which it is good to bring up children because of the moral atmosphere. The town has a New England conscience with a Kansas attachment. It boasts of having been a station in the underground railway, and it maintains a most uncompromising attitude toward certain social delinquencies, especially the sale of liquor.

Upon my arrival, I was cordially received by a committee, and one of its members told me that the jail was full of criminal foreigners—Greeks. What crimes they had committed he did not know.

Recalling my own experience, I made inquiries and found that six Greeks were in the county jail. They had been arrested in September (it was now March) charged with the heinous crime of having gone to the unregenerate state of Nebraska, where they purchased a barrel of beer which they drank

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on the Sabbath day in their camp by the railroad.

Possibly these Greeks were just ignorant foreigners and now harbour no sense of injustice suffered; possibly they still think this country "the land of the free and the home of the brave." They may even be ready to obey its laws and reverence its institutions. I do not know how they feel, but I do know this: those Greeks were kept in prison for breaking a law of which they were ignorant, and even if they were aware of its existence and broke it knowingly, the punishment did not fit the crime.

They were kept as criminals and regarded as criminals; they were unvisited and uncomforted, and they were incarcerated at a time when their country called for her native sons to do battle against the Turk.

Some day the sense of injustice suffered may come to them, and they will ask themselves whether every man in Kansas who drinks beer is punished as they were. They will wonder why real criminals go free, or escape with nominal punishment. I venture to predict that in some great crisis, when this country needs men who respect her laws and love her institutions, these men and multitudes of others who have suffered such injustices as they have, will fail her.

I pleaded for those imprisoned Greeks that

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night and my plea was effective. The just judge who condemned them, pardoned them; but so just was he that the fine of one hundred dollars each, not yet paid, was left hanging over them, and to their credit be it said, they remained in that town and paid every cent of it. This judge no doubt knows his New Testament; he certainly made the Greeks pay the "uttermost farthing" before his outraged sense of justice was appeased.

Those Greeks spent, together, over three years in jail, forfeited more than fifteen hundred dollars in wages and lost in bodily health and self-respect beyond calculation.

Another incident occurred last spring as I was passing through a border state on one of those nerve-racking coal roads.

At a small, desolate mining village a group of men entered the car, unwillingly enough. They were chained to one another and were driven to their seats with curses and the butt of a gun. They were Italian miners, part of that human material now being scattered all over the United States, carried by something swifter though not less insistent than the glacial movements which graved the beds of the rivers and shifted so much of earth's original scenery. There was some danger of violence and the accompanying minions of the law held back the angry passengers. There

was scarcely a moment, however, when they themselves did not apply some vigorous measure to assure themselves that three undersized Southern Italians, chained one to another, should not escape them.

The car was uncomfortably crowded and grew more so at every station; for the next day the new governor was to be inaugurated at the capital, toward which our train was leisurely travelling.

I had some difficulty in ethnologically classifying the man who shared my seat. He was large, the colonel and major type, although his head was rounder. The features too were of a different cast, his speech less refined and his manners less gentle.

He wore a broad, new hat, his hair was long, curling slightly, and he had an air of special importance, the cause of which I discovered later.

"I wonder why they are treating those poor fellows so roughly," I audibly soliloquized, turning to him. He was studying a typewritten document and evidently did not relish the interruption.

"Is that any of your business?" he asked, punctuating the short sentence with a liberal supply of oaths.

"Yes, I have no other business," I replied. "I travel about the world trying to find out why we

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people treat one another as we do, if we happen to be of different races."

"What kind of business is that?" looking up from his manuscript and regarding me suspiciously.

"Well," I said, "we call that 'Social Psychology.'"

"That's a new graft," he replied with a laugh.
"How much is there in it?"

"A little money and a great deal of joy," I said with an answering smile.

Then he folded his manuscript and made ready to find out more about my "graft," which I proceeded to explain.

"You see, from the beginning, when a man saw another who wasn't just like him, he said: 'Will he kill me or shall I kill him?' Then they both went about finding out. The man who survived regarded himself as the greater man, and his descendants belonged to the superior race.

"We haven't gone much beyond that point," I continued. "We hide our primitive hate under what we proudly call race prejudice or patriotism, but it's the old, unchanged fear and dislike of the unlike, and we act very much as the savages did who may have lived here before the glaciers ploughed up your state and helped to manufacture the coal you are now digging.

"I don't know you," I went on, "but I am pretty sure that you feel mean toward those poor 'Dagoes' just because you want to assert your superiority.

"I have discovered that a man isn't quite happy unless he can feel himself superior to something, and these mountain folk of yours take those many, hungry looking dogs along just so they can have something to kick. Am I right?"

"Well," he replied, clearing his throat and straightening himself, while into his eyes came a steel-like coldness, "you don't mean to say that we are not superior to these Dagoes, these Black Hand murderers?"

"No, I am not ready to say that yet; but tell me about them. Whom did they kill, and how?"

Then he told me the story and he knew it well, for he was a re-elected state official now going to be sworn in. There was a coal miners' strike—rather a chronic disease in that somewhat lawless state—and the militia was called out. Violence begat violence and one of the militiamen, standing guard at night, was killed by a bullet, fired from a Winchester rifle at an approximately certain distance.

The Italians were found at that place the next day, were arrested and were now on their way to the county seat to be tried.

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My companion evidently had found my "graft" interesting, for he permitted me to interview the Italians.

None of them knew definitely of what crime they were accused, and all, of course, protested their innocence.

None of them had served as soldiers and all said they were unacquainted with the use of firearms.

When we reached the end of the road where we were all admonished to change cars and not forget our parcels, the officer graciously allowed me to make an experiment. The men were freed from their shackles and I told them that a high and mighty official was watching them and that the best marksman of the group would find favour in his sight. They were then in turn given the Winchester rifle, which they handled as if it were a pickaxe. They did not know how to load it, and after it was loaded for them and I asked them to fire, they fell upon their knees and begged to be permitted to show their prowess with a stiletto, the use of which they understood. Within twenty-four hours additional testimony was furnished, which proved beyond doubt that the Italians were not implicated in the crime with which they were charged.

I felt deeply grateful to the man who per-

mitted me to intervene in their behalf; but what would have happened if by chance, or the power we call Providence, I had not been thrown into the sphere of their suffering? Undoubtedly, they would have been convicted of murder and paid the penalty for a crime which they never committed.

Not only is ignorance of our laws and our language a fruitful cause of the delinquency of immigrants and their children, but the venality of police officials, the condition of our courts and prisons, not only fail to inspire respect, but contribute much to the development of those criminal tendencies with which nature has, to a degree, endowed all men.

An interesting illustration of this is a Russian Jew who recently was executed and into whose closing days I was able to bring a ray of comfort. Because of his blood-thirstiness he had gained the characteristic title, "The Human Hyena." His story throws the ordinary melodrama into the shade; but suffice it to say that he had a *p penchant* for killing prison guards and carried the murder of sixteen of them upon his guilty soul. Originally he came into the courts for a petty crime, but developed into a murderer in prison, through the inhuman treatment he received.

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Fortunately, I left the county jail with no thirst for blood; but with a fiercer passion to right the wrongs under which men suffer, and that, I think, was my one purpose in life when the prison door closed behind me.

XV

HOW TRAMPS ARE MADE

THE great highways between the East and the West are now so familiar to me that even when a train stops between stations at night I am fairly sure of my whereabouts. I have travelled hither and thither, in Pullman cars, immigrant trains, automobiles, on a bicycle, on foot; and if the Lord were to make me the promise he made Joshua, to give me "every place which the sole of my foot has trod upon," I would own half this continent.

It is needless to say that when, after my release from jail, I began my journey from Connellsville to Chicago, I owned nothing and that the trip did not add to my possessions. Before many days I developed a very lively interest in the genus "hobo," numbers of whom I met. As a result, I frequently, and without a twinge of conscience, break every sociological rule in regard to the treatment of tramps.

I know by experience a number of things which the average sociologist has not learned in his university. I know, for instance, the processes which

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turn men out upon the highway, and with what cruelty and swiftness a self-respecting man may be turned into a tramp.

Of course I had had foretastes of all that was to come. I knew the pains of hunger, of cold and of homelessness, but I had yet to learn what was to be a social outcast, to walk the monotonous stretches of a long iron lane which has no turning and to bear in one's heart a fierce hate toward the universe in general and county courts in particular.

The only thing which made it at all bearable and kept me above the purposeless army of the tramps I met was the sweet vengeance which I nursed—that inner unity with all the oppressed, that "*Weltschmerz*" which then drew me toward the anarchists in Chicago. Let me record here that although I thought organized society unjust and cruel, the men and women whom I met while a tramp were, as a rule, good, and more than just; they were merciful.

The most crabbed pessimist might be cured of his disease by being suddenly thrust out into the world a tramp, and should he persist in his pessimism, he would find himself nearly alone among that ilk which perhaps is so numerous, just because men and women are kind.

No measures advocated to suppress the tramp are too rigorous, and I agree with all the anath-

emas hurled upon his head; but as long as I live I shall give every tramp I meet a chance to prove himself a man. Even if he fails me, I shall remember, not only my own frailties but also the fact that he is not the only member of society who is willing to eat bread which he has not earned, and ride on trains without paying his fare. I have met tramps in all shifts of society and those at the bottom are not its most serious menace.

I was turned into a tramp over night. As I had worn my miner's outfit while in that delightful resort, the county jail of Connellsville, when I was released at four o'clock one afternoon I had on fairly good clothes, but not a single cent of money in my numerous pockets.

I returned to the hut which first had sheltered me. The old woman was still washing clothes in the stuffy room, the old man was sleeping in the dirty bed and the children were as before, in all stages of neglect. The strike had lasted long, the cupboard was empty and they had a lodger, so she could not offer me even half of the old man's bed.

I slept that night about five miles out of town in an empty coal car, and when I woke my clothes were soiled, my face black and, as far as society was concerned, I was a tramp.

No doubt if I could have looked into a mirror

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I would have been repellent to myself; why, therefore, should I blame others for shunning me?

I walked without food the whole day—westward, always westward. In the evening hunger drove me into a farmyard. The dogs barked at me and the children scampered away, crying, excitedly, "A tramp!"

The farmer had pity on me and took me in. I worked for him the next day, stayed that night, and in the morning he tried to persuade me to remain and work out my salvation on his farm; but I wanted to go to Chicago and refused his generous offer.

He went with me as far as the water tank, a good two-mile walk. He talked to me all the way. He spoke to my soul, to my better self, as few other men ever have spoken, and when he left me I felt as if a holy presence had departed.

I frequently pass that farm on my trips East and always take off my hat to the little house as I say a mental, "thank you."

I call the place Emmaus, for "here I walked with the Lord and knew it not."

The first night after leaving the farm I was twenty miles nearer my goal, hungry and foot-sore. A dear old German couple fed me and gave me their guest chamber, for the sake of a son who had wandered away into a "far country."

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In the morning I helped with the chores and after breakfast they had family worship; they prayed for their son that he might come back, and for me that I might be led home.

The next day I worked on another farm where the owner urged me to stay as tutor to his sons, for he discovered that I took more interest in a Latin text-book than in the woodpile, on which he tried my ability and my patience. I remained a week, but found that I could make more impression on the woodpile than on the lads' Latin, so I left them with five dollars in my pocket, joying in my riches.

My journey westward was interrupted for a good many weeks by a St. Bernard dog and a young lady. If this were a novel there would have been a romance; being a true story, there was none.

The dog had an aversion to tramps, which he demonstrated on me, and the young lady came to the rescue.

The farm was a model one, the house homelike, and the family hospitable. My wound was dressed, and I was urged to remain until it healed, and I confess I did not regret it. My environment was congenial, as there were books and music. The daughter of the house interested me greatly.

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for she was a charming college girl, the first of her species to cross my path.

Unfortunately this episode ended unpleasantly, as it began. My host was from Alsace-Lorraine. One evening in discussing the Franco-Prussian war he grew enraged at my defence of the Germans and with more force than politeness declared (what I had several times suggested) that I was sufficiently recovered to resume my journey, which I did without loss of time.

That night I slept in the open once more with a bundle of grain as my pillow.

Not all my experiences were so dramatic or so pleasant as the one just recorded. One particular place remains in my memory, for it had a unique way of making the useless tramp profitable. I suppose it was known all through trampdom, for no one could get anything to eat in that town without earning it first. It is the junction point of a railroad, and at night a meal and a lodging could be earned by climbing upon a coal car and throwing coal down the embankment. The community thus got its coal, and the tramps earned their living honestly.

Those I met were of two kinds, professionals and amateurs like myself, who might be turned into professionals if conditions proved favourable.

Those who were in the business frequently capitalized their skill and lived upon the toil of the amateurs. There were good and evil men among them, and some who were both, in varied proportion.

There were men who were born wrong, others who started wrong, many who would end wrong and they knew it. All were redeemable at one time or another, if society only knew when and how.

After many weeks of varied adventures I reached South Bend, Ind., in company with a German tramp who had previous experience on the road, and through him I found a German boarding house whose greatest profits evidently came from the bar. Within a day I was at work in the Oliver plough factory.

My task was an easy but monotonous one. With a pair of tongs I seized a piece of hot metal, laid it upon a machine, touched the lever and a heavy hammer descended, turning the shapeless iron as if by magic into a ploughshare.

A busy machine in front of me fed my never decreasing pile, and a hungry machine behind me waited for each ploughshare which I had helped stamp into being. In but a few days I kept pace with both machines and earned one dollar and fifty cents for twelve hours' labour. I worked in

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a basement which was fairly cool because it was damp, but the damp and the heat in some way produced rheumatism. Within two weeks I was on my back, in the hands of a physician who took all my earnings in exchange for the return of my health, for which he or my buoyant youth was responsible—I have not yet decided. He forbade me to go to work in the damp basement, and as there was no other job to be had, I found myself again on the road to Chicago, this time on the Lake Shore, afoot as usual.

An interesting event occurred during my stay in South Bend which influenced me in various ways and should be recorded. I discovered that a certain village was some seven miles from that city. I remembered the name because the Bohemian people who came over with me in the steerage had moved to a farm in that neighbourhood. True to the sense of fellowship begotten in the steerage I went out to find them.

They were located on a little farm and had begun with patient industry to recover their fortune, lost in the Old World. Three daughters and two sons worked together on the farm. In spite of the fact that they had been removed but a short time from the steerage, I found many evidences of Americanizing influences. I shall mention two

of them, because each worked in a different direction.

One was a Bohemian newspaper printed in Chicago, typically American in all but the language. It fitted into my anarchistic mood, for it was atheistic in its tendency. The second agency was a little Protestant church of the ultra-evangelistic type which, although this family was Roman Catholic, had touched it, especially from the social side.

On Sunday evening I went to church with the daughters. The sons did not go, for they were under the spell of the Bohemian newspaper.

It was a new experience, and the unconventional, unecclesiastical atmosphere touched me. The music repelled me at first, but after a while the rhythm of the hymns caught my fancy and I sang the chorus of an emotional revival hymn with real pleasure.

The sermon was almost unintelligible to me, but the earnestness of the preacher made its primitive appeal.

The men and women at the meeting called each other brother and sister; they shook hands with the stranger and invited him to come again. Their cordiality breathed around me an atmosphere of fellowship for which my heart had long yearned.

That night on returning to the farmhouse we

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discussed religion until nearly midnight. When I left I promised to come again, but was prevented from doing so by my illness and subsequent departure from South Bend.

More than twenty-five years passed before I returned, and then I lectured in the meeting house. I think my most appreciative listeners were the Bohemian girls with their husbands and children, who occupied the two front pews and filled every seat.

XVI

THE GATE INTO CHICAGO

AN entanglement of railroad tracks, miles of hot sand dunes, a stretch of inland sea; the sky line assaulted by gigantic elevators and smokestacks, a block or two crowded by houses dropped into an empty prairie—that is the beginning of Chicago. Certainly it began too soon for a certain footsore traveller, who thought he had arrived—then found that the guide-post promised fifteen miles more of labyrinthine tracks, of sand dunes fashioned into scrubby streets, of multiplied elevators and smokestacks and more miles of sporadically settled prairie. Chicago held out no illusions; she promised nothing but toil, grime, sore feet and a ceaseless struggle for just shelter and a mouthful of food. To me, accustomed to the beauties of large cities in the Old World, she seemed forbiddingly, hopelessly ugly and pitiless. Even now, after having discovered the soul and the heart of her—I have a distinct feeling of fear when I arrive there, although I step from a Pullman car and feel safe, at least from want.

The process of selection takes place in hobo land

as it does everywhere else, and out of the army of tramps which I met, a rather decent Bohemian attached himself to me. He had been in Chicago before, and failing to gain a foothold at that time was returning to try again. He had some very attractive schemes for beginning to make a fortune for both of us, and the one which seemed to him most alluring was to go into the saloon business under the patronage of some beer-brewer. Neither capital nor character being needed, and having had the necessary experience with liquor on both sides of the bar, his future seemed rosy indeed, and generous fellow that he was, he was ready to share its glow with me.

Being blessed by a temperate ancestry, liquor was repugnant to me, whether to buy or sell; so I did not embark in the saloon business, although for a man situated as I was, entrance into Chicago almost invariably lay through that avenue.

I often wish back the opportunity of receiving the first impression of places and cities I have seen, but never of Chicago.

What the Loop, that congested, noise-girdled shopping district, is to those privileged to spend money, Canal Street and West Madison Street are to those compelled to earn it in the hardest way. How can one describe them?

Solid phalanxes of saloons, reeking from stale

beer odours, mechanical music, blatant and harsh; long lines of men leaning over brass trimmed bars, poor, wasted remnants of womanhood, brazen creatures, pitilessly repellent, offering up all that is left them on the altar of man's lust; whirling wheels of chance and poor, duped humanity crowding about, eager to stake the last cent remaining from a hard-earned wage. Anxious groups surrounding bulletin boards which announced hard work for little pay, criers for boarding houses pulling and cajoling their victims, and the watchful Jewish trader eager for bargaining—that was the Chicago to which my hobo comrade introduced me.

He knew where to get the largest schooner of beer and the best free lunch. He opened to me the door into Chicago through that degrading, demoralizing institution, the saloon; and the more I saw of it, the more I became convinced that the selling of liquor was the most harmless of all its functions. Beneath it, above it and in the rear, it dealt out damnation indescribable and unmentionable.

Leaving my comrade absorbed in a free lunch and beer, the drink paid for out of my meagre purse, I started down Canal Street, studying the posters of various labour agencies which at that time were invariably connected with saloons.

A man who evidently had watched me, stopped

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with me in front of one of those places and cordially invited me to enter and consider an attractive situation. I was eager for work and went in with him. I was asked to step in front of the bar—then I felt something give way and I was hurled into darkness. I knew nothing until late at night I felt myself being dragged out into an alley and abandoned.

No one came in answer to my feeble cries, so I summoned enough strength to crawl back to the street. As I came staggering out of the darkness a policeman caught me by the back of the neck, dragged me to a street lamp and in a few minutes I could hear the tramping of horses. At the time I did not know that it was a patrol wagon into which I was roughly pushed, and after a short ride, during which no explanation was vouchsafed me, I was deposited at the Harrison Street Police Station.

There is a tradition that one ought not to speak ill of the dead; I suppose not even of dead police stations. Fortunately, this horrible man trap is no more—but without slandering the “dear departed,” I can say that it was worse than the saloon in which I was knocked down and robbed of the little I had—and that is saying a great deal.

That night I spent in a huge basement cell, a sort of general depository of the day's unsorted

human refuse. Men were fighting for room to stretch out and rest their miserable bodies, and they fought like savages. Some were drunk and delirious, some sick and sore, others were hungry and dirty; all were crying, laughing or singing until an insane asylum would have seemed like a child's nursery in comparison with that bedlam. There was just one time when the room was comparatively quiet, when men were sleeping. Then it was more gruesome than the noise, for they talked in their sleep.

I heard snatches of tender words, angry curses, the ravings of men under the spell of hideous dreams; then some one chuckled as if enjoying a brief breath of happiness, and one man woke and began to curse his dreaming neighbour, who too awoke. Blow followed blow and men lived in hell again until daybreak.

I have said that I should not care to have my first impressions of Chicago repeated, yet I have shared with thousands of men and women their experience, more or less like my own.

Until very lately the immigrant in Chicago, unless he had waiting friends, found no gateway open to him except the saloon, the brothel, the cheap lodging house and finally the "lock up."

The agencies which began the assimilative process were all anti-social, greedy for their prey and,

worst of all, the police was in league with them and protected them. There was nothing left to do but walk up and down in impotent rage and inveigh against a city which permitted its newest and most potential human material to be polluted, if not corrupted, at the very entrance into its life.

I have repeatedly snatched men from the doors of gambling-rooms, from fake labour agencies and from greedy hotel runners, only to find myself unpleasantly involved with the police; while I usually got a cursing, if not worse, for my pains.

An Immigrant Protective League and the Y.M.C.A. are now doing fine work in directing and sheltering the new-comers. Nevertheless, it is a reflection upon the spirit which governs the city that *private individuals* had to organize a sort of vigilance committee to do this most elementary work of justice for helpless strangers.

There are now two forces which do the fundamental work for the assimilation of our immigrant. One of them is the anti-social group of agencies which I have mentioned, and until very lately it did its work unchallenged. The other is the privately organized associations which under the recent growth of the social conscience have multiplied and, in a measure at least, checked the enemy.

The American people as a whole clamour with a

kind of savage hunger for the assimilation of the immigrant; but the question into what he is to be assimilated has not agitated them to any marked degree. Whether or not we threw the immigrant to the dogs did not matter, so long as he was eaten up and his bones gnawed free of anything foreign which adhered to his nature.

However, when that which is eaten by the dogs becomes dog, sometimes very savage dog, we develop a national hydrophobia which manifests itself in great aversion to the immigrant in general. We load him with all the curses of our civilization and blame him for all its ills, from race suicide to the I.W.W.

When I finally escaped this primary influence which had so rudely touched me, I had as yet no special grievance against society, but I had a clear understanding of the suffering of the new-comer to an American city. I also had a profound sympathy with those who were at war against a government which seemed not only stupid, but venal, and which on the face of it was no better than the most brutal autocracy, although it called itself a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

This sympathy I was eager to express, but the immediate physical necessities silenced for a while my burning idealism.

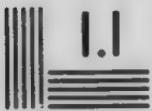


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In my aimless wandering I drifted beyond the territory marked by the red line of crime and misery. I walked endless stretches of maddening streets as hopeless as they were straight, hot and ugly. North as far as the picturesque water tower on Lake Michigan, south as far as the city had gone on its conquering way. The few remaining landmarks, whenever I see them, remind me of hunger, weariness and despair.

Chicago is full of friends now. I need never go to an hotel for shelter. I need not even travel on a street car; I have spoken in its fashionable churches and been banqueted in the gilded caverns of its sumptuous hostleries; but best of all, I have been drawn into the blessed circle of those who are giving wealth and time and life for the bettering of the very conditions from which I once suffered.

Yet I have never been able to love Chicago. Perhaps I ought to love it, if only because it reminds me of "how deep the hole out of which I was drawn, and how horrible the pit out of which I was digged."

XVII

AMONG THE BOHEMIANS

AFTER a fruitless search for work which would give me a chance to rehabilitate myself, I returned to the West Side; but fortunately wandered beyond the limits of that awful portal and found myself, to my great delight, in Chicago's "Bohemia."

I shall never forget the joy I felt in reading Czechish names and signs, and hearing again the language which was as familiar to me as my mother tongue.

I always felt a close kinship with the Bohemian people, whose unhappy history I knew and whose genius I understood and valued. I suppose while "blood is thicker than water," language is thicker than blood, and the larger relationship rests more upon ability to understand another people's ideals and share them, than upon general hereditary factors.

Perhaps more than any other people, the Bohemians have been able to transplant their national ideals and characteristics to the new soil, developing them to a marked degree. This may be due to

the great difficulties under which they have lived in the Old World, so that when, in this country, they can speak and print their beloved language, they do it with a fierce passion as if to make up for lost time.

The contradictory characteristics of these, the most talented of the Slavic peoples, give them uncommon interest. Their light-heartedness and sadness, hospitality and hostility, industry and idleness, their passionate loves and hates, their devotion to art, their piety, infidelity and materialism—all seemed to be running at full tide when I happened upon "Bohemia in Chicago," in my quest for work. Had there been the least opposition to their expression, these people might have built a mediæval castle wall around themselves and annexed their territory to the Kingdom of Bohemia.

I was walking through one of those West Side streets which differ from others in nothing but the name, when I saw men digging for the foundation of a house. Upon asking in Bohemian for a job, I got my opportunity, not only to work, but also to enter into the life of the most radical section of the Bohemian community.

The man who employed me was a tailor who, with the thrift of his race, had saved enough money to build a house. It was most fortunate for me

that when the evening of the first day's labour came, he had discovered that I was homeless and offered me lodging under his roof, which, of course, I most gratefully accepted.

Not only was the place scrupulously clean, but there were music and good literature. The latter was decidedly radical, ranging from Spencer to Ingersoll. The home also brought me in contact with people of some education.

At that time the social life of the men still centred almost entirely around the saloon, an institution which unfortunately and invariably takes on Anglo-Saxon qualities, no matter with what national elements it is started, or by what name it is called. It might be a matter of some interest to discover why this is so; but whatever the reason, it is certain that the saloon plays an important part in the Americanization of the immigrant. It frequently aims to preserve his social tendencies and usually harbours the national societies which spring up in every immigrant group.

The saloon patronized by my host and employer was located on Halstead Street and bore all the outer marks of its American prototype, although within were the Bohemian elements which gave it something of a home or club atmosphere.

What attracted me was the newspapers which

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were kept on file and the meetings of a Free-thinkers' Club, which had its headquarters there.

I was in the mood to yield myself completely to its influence and rejoiced in its intellectual atmosphere, which meant more to me than bread and meat after my recent stultifying experiences.

This radical movement which seemed so natural to the Bohemian communities at that time was an inevitable reaction from their intolerant past in which Church and State, bishop and king had each been bad, and together did their worst.

Out of an environment of superstition and oppression these people had come into the buoyant atmosphere of religious freedom, and they were breathing like men escaped from a tomb. Much of their speech was like the raving of madmen, but, after all, it was a fine idealism to which they tried to give expression, and this movement, harmful as it must have been in some directions, saved them from a gross materialism to which they were naturally inclined.

This group, which I joined, was then reading the essays of Thomas Paine, and no matter what one may think of his philosophy or his attitude toward traditional religion—it seemed to me wonderful, to see ditch diggers, tailors and cobblers, at the end of the day's work discussing such serious literature so earnestly. This movement among the

Bohemians has been severely attacked as atheistic. It never deserved that opprobrium, for at its heart it was religious, only it was seeking a high, free level. It never was dangerous, because, in spite of the attempt to inoculate the younger generation, the virus never took.

For some reason, anti-religious movements cannot be propagated in this country. No matter how virile the movement in its beginning, it dwindle and dies, and the second generation of even the most radical propagandists, becomes either respectably religious, or blends with that great mass of people who are neither hot nor cold in their attitude toward the things of the spirit.

During this period I came in touch with a number of anarchists and heard their vehement onslaught against organized government. While I never was carried away by their extreme individualism, and never was in danger of becoming an assassin, I felt keenly the injustice they deplored, and sympathized deeply with them in their protest against the brutal hanging of some of their number, which not long before had startled the United States.

In the exercise of justice, governments are apt to be both cruel and unjust, and I am not sure but that the verdict against the Chicago anarchists will one day be revised by a generation of men far

enough removed from the hate and prejudice gendered at that time to judge the matter impartially.

I heard Mrs. Parsons, the wife of one of the condemned anarchists, and suffered greatly as I listened to her. While I never plotted violent deeds, I appreciated her desire to avenge what she called judicial murder. After all, it is easy for us who are safely removed from the suffering and need of the toilers, to condemn the radicals or label men and movements with a name which smacks of the plague or the pestilence. It was a crowd like that which said of Jesus, "He hath a devil," and joined in the ready cry: "Crucify Him!"

The one thing we are all apt to forget is, that anarchy and kindred movements grow out of a soil made stony and hard by injustice. They are symptoms of a disease in the body social, and the ill cannot be cured by jailing or hanging or crucifying the men who feel the hurt most and cry out in their agony.

It was in this Chicago Bohemian saloon that I began to speak in public, and I delivered a series of talks on Bakunin and Tolstoy.

The latter's religious idealism gave no little offence to my auditors, but to me it was the saving element in the situation and kept my soul alive during that most critical period. These talks were

exceedingly informal, broken into by questions, jests and ridicule. Although I always began with a definite theme, all the affairs of the universe which needed righting were usually touched upon before I finished.

The startling thing to me was then, and now is, the latent idealism in these immigrant groups which can make of even a saloon something resembling a people's university. Unfortunately, this idealism does not survive long, for in that very saloon where at that time men sat and leisurely drank their beer, while they discussed the philosophy of Bakunin and Tolstoy, they now stand before the bar and make a business of drinking. They may discuss a prize fight or the latest news from the baseball field, but nothing more elevating.

The social settlement which might have given me a grappling place for the higher things, if it existed at all, was in its swaddling clothes, and the so-called respectable people never wandered into my social sphere.

When the house of my Bohemian host was finished I found a job in a machine shop and gradually lifted myself to a position of leadership among my shopmates. During the noon hour they would ask me questions and once I attempted to deliver an address, but the foreman interfered, a quarrel ensued and I was summarily discharged.

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I had little money saved, but I had some good clothing and an accumulation of paper-bound books.

Then began a weary journey from shop to mill in a vain search for work; until my last penny was eaten up, all my surplus clothing had become security for my lodging and the books were sold for a pittance.

It was a year of great industrial depression; on one side, over-production, and on the other, under-consumption. Strikes and riots combined to make the situation abnormal, and after even the casual jobs failed I again turned westward, this time to the great harvest fields of Minnesota.

XVIII

THE GREAT HARVEST FIELDS

THE spirit of a city is as real as its bricks and mortar, although less changeable. Of the old Chicago which I knew, little is left, except here and there a struggling landmark that by chance has escaped the ruthless renewal constantly going on. Its spirit is still the same, although there are signs that its dominant ideal, when crystallized, may read: "*I will*" *be human*.

The struggle between the flesh and the spirit is always difficult in a city where flesh is merchandise, and where buying and selling it are not confined to the stockyards and factories.

The spirit of Chicago is much the same whether it manifests itself in the shop or the church, in the saloon or the Sunday school. It is relentless—it drives the "man with the hoe" or the man with the Bible at the same speed, and souls are saved as fiercely as they are damned.

There is something masterful about it; yet its very masterfulness is by virtue of horsepower and gross tonnage, rather than by the power of soul

and mind. It has both, however, and it is no small wonder that they survive and grow.

To me Chicago is a marvel, made up as it is of overlapping strata of aliens from beyond the sea and aliens from its own surrounding prairies—all of them cast into her turmoil of labour, eating their bread by the sweat of their brow or by the shrewder method—eating it by the sweat of other men's brows. Chicago is a marvellous city to me; not because of the cattle she kills or the trains she speeds from her sheds or the piles of stones she has set into skeletons of steel; but because the human soul survives and men can get away from her without harm.

When I left Chicago for the Minnesota harvest fields I offered up a fervent prayer of thanksgiving for being able to go from it alive; although the coming and going are easier now, and my sojourn always pleasant, I still have that same prayer on my lips whenever I leave Chicago.

It is not easy to put the city behind you, for it stretches far beyond the railroad yards and the grain towers and the belching smokestacks. Its suburbs, like little children, cling to its outskirts, and the wanderer has much difficulty in finding his way into the unobstructed country.

The highway is finally reached when the rails run straight toward the West, and smaller or larger

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groups of travellers are found hovering about the tracks, awaiting the opportune moment to "jump a freight," a most interesting, if dangerous, way of leaving the city.

It takes a trained hand (or foot) to know just when to jump, what car is likely to be most comfortable, and how to avoid being detected by the train crew. For all this I depended upon a stalwart young German, whose destination, like my own, was the harvest fields of Minnesota.

Evidently the train crew was alert, for we were not long on the way in an empty car when we received a visit from several of the trainmen. They were in no way much distinguished from us, either by clothes or character, except that they were masters of the situation.

They demanded money, and when it was not forthcoming we were directed to hold up our hands, and they helped themselves to what little change we had. They were gentlemanly enough, however, to leave us in possession of the box car in which we spent a fairly comfortable night.

In the morning a new crew came to visit us, and when they found that we were "cleaned out," they told us in their choicest English to "get out," which we proceeded to do.

We were in a town on the Mississippi River,

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but not on the side where the rich fields lay, the only place where we were wanted.

The shores were connected by a railroad bridge, a mere steel skeleton thrown across the water. The railroad crews were especially vigilant and we were thrown from every train we jumped; so that finally nothing was left but to try the dangerous journey on foot, between trains, the young German and I being the only ones willing to take the risk.

It is easy enough to walk on railroad ties when the solid earth is a foot or so beneath, but a raging river under one's feet confuses the eyes; so our progress was slow and not at all pleasant. Many a time I felt like turning back, but it was easier to follow the impulse that carried me forward. Within a quarter of a mile of the other shore I heard some one shouting, and, looking up, saw a man wildly waving at us from the river's bank. Then came the sharp whistle of a locomotive, and to my horror a train thundered onto the bridge.

The only thing to do was, squeeze between the ties, cling to a horizontal beam and hang beneath the track until the train passed. It seemed hours before we crawled back onto the trestle, and with faces bespattered by escaping steam and ashes, finished the perilous journey.

A genuinely Irish scolding, but nothing worse,

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awaited us when we reached the watchman's house. From him we also received the doleful news that the harvest in that part of Minnesota was finished. He told us that we still had a great many miles to travel before we would find the work we were seeking, and added for our encouragement that "harvest hands this year seem to be as thick as grasshoppers."

My travelling companion was a strong, good-natured fellow who knew the ways of the road, although he was not a tramp. He managed to procure food for both of us and knew how to cook it. At night we slept beneath the stars on a bed which he prepared, and which I recall with a certain longing many a time when I am cooped in between the walls of a civilized bedroom. We inquired for work and easily secured the few hours' labour which supplied our simple wants.

As we tramped on into the glorious autumn there was a sense of freedom about it all which might have proved dangerous to some natures; but I was most happy when at last we reached the first fields where the grain was still uncut and the farmer chose me to be his helper.

I do not know upon what basis he made his choice, for I was smaller and slighter than my companion, and not used to the hard labour which awaited me. So my German companion and I

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parted, and I was both glad and sorry to see him go.

I revelled in the orderly, clean room assigned me, and after a good supper went to sleep, glad to say good-bye to the road once more and begin life over again.

I seemed to have slept but a few minutes when I was awakened, and, accompanied by my employer, went to the stable to help with the morning chores.

Soon I followed the harvester which ate its way through the white fields, dropping the fat bundles of wheat. These I carried away and formed into companionable groups by planting them safely, with their heavy heads together, putting over them the sheltering sheaf. It was a novel task for me and each shock was something of an achievement. Although my arms were scratched by the bearded grain and all my muscles ached, there was an exhilaration about it which I have never felt at any other work. Then the farmer was a royal fellow, a typical American of good education, and, best of all, there were children who came trooping to the field carrying jugs of water and a luncheon of bread and butter. They made friends with the stranger, and soon the work was all joy, if not all play.

It is true that the evening did not come too

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soon and that the chores were done with a very weary body, but it was a wonderful evening. After a hearty supper and a romp with the children there were family prayers and a hymn which the mother accompanied on a cottage organ. Then all retired.

There was excessive heat during that harvest time, varied by desperate storms which swept wildly across those Minnesota prairies while I continued at the hard task of lifting bundles of grain and building shocks; but somehow, out in the glory of God's fields I forgot my wrongs and sufferings, and something of faith and hope came stealing back.

I stayed through the harvest and helped with the threshing, and when that was finished I was loath to go and the farmer was loath to see me go; so I stayed until the corn was cut and put in shock.

That rural community on the banks of the Mississippi was characteristically American—that is, thoroughly mixed. Our farm was joined on one side by that of a Frenchman who had come into possession of the land by marrying a squaw, whom he divorced, but who at that time was taking care of the children of the Frenchwoman whom he had married.

Toward the river, our nearest neighbour was a

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curious and interesting German, who raised most wonderful vegetables and loved his violin and his beer. Sunday afternoons we would spend together talking about the Fatherland, and he would play and I would sing some of those solemn folksongs which the German likes to sing when he is most happy.

In another direction our neighbours were Swedes, at that time as much disliked as Italians and Hungarians are now. In those pioneer days the Swedes had a decidedly low standard of living, or perhaps spent little money except for the bare necessities of life.

Saturday was a great day, for in the afternoon the entire family would drive to town in the four-seated wagonette, and most of the time I was permitted to go.

There was shopping to do and the German barber would cut my thick, refractory locks. There was a public library where I could borrow books and pick up the lost threads of English literature, at its best.

I loved Carlyle; the very rush of his speech stimulated me, although involved as his sentences were, the meaning was frequently obscure. His "Heroes and Hero Worship" I read in the few snatches of twilight which remained after the chores were done, or at noon, when the farmer

was smoking his after-dinner pipe. I suppose one cannot read Carlyle without being mastered by him. I, at least, lived in the current of his ideas for a long time, and although now I rarely read him, I still feel as if something of his prophetic power had remained with me.

There was a set of Dickens in the house, but, strange to say, few of his characters appealed to me. Many of them I thought were caricatures and all looked to me as if poured into a mould, stiff and unyielding. Perhaps I was too serious, and so did not relish his humour.

To this period I owe a brief acquaintanceship with Ruskin, who helped to spiritualize and soften my social views, and who made me see cloud and stone and leaf with a new appreciation of their beauty.

The farmer read the Bible every evening, and I felt then, and still feel, that its unsurpassed English alone ought to give it a place in each day's meditation. If it could do nothing else for the growing generation, it would refine and strengthen its speech.

It made no religious appeal to me then. Indeed, I was strongly agnostic toward its teachings, but the good man's prayers moved me deeply, especially as he always prayed for me in a most tender and touching way.

The atmosphere of the home, which was thoroughly Puritan, was remarkably sympathetic to me; for Puritanism and Judaism are children of the same spirit.

I could feel it in the dominance of religious ideals expressed in prayers and grace before meals, the ascetic view in its attitude toward amusements, its sublimely moral tone in the relation between the sexes, and the shrewd business sense. Even its casuistry was Jewish; so were the names of the children—Esther, Samuel, Isaac and Joseph, while the farmer's name was Jeremiah and his wife, Ruth.

I was then in the period when poetry appealed to me, and I remember one day, in a reckless mood, buying a number of *Harper's Magazine* because it contained Longfellow's "Morituri Salutamus." I fear I bored the whole neighbourhood by reading it aloud wherever I went, it so fitted my mood. Even now those stately lines often come back to me:

"O ye familiar scenes, ye groves of pine
That once were mine and are no longer mine;
Thou river, widening through the meadows green
To the vast sea, so near and yet unseen."

With those lines comes back the sense of security and serenity I felt at the close of day, with its

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consciousness of honest, hard work well done, the sweet, hot smell of soil and grasses, the calves and colts that I fed and called by name, and within me the growth of a new man. So happy was I that I had already mapped out for myself a life to be spent on the soil.

In imagination I became the owner of many acres, with a home in the midst of green fields, filled by books and music. Even the wife and children were there, the barns and the cattle, while over it all hovered the benediction of peace. I was ready to forget the turmoil and greed of the city, the injustice of courts and jails, the hunger men suffered in the midst of plenty, the heat of the smelter and the depths of the mine.

My future should be lived in a Tolstoyan idyll; but life was not to be of my own planning. When the first sharp frosts had turned the verdure black, and the shocks of corn, like rows of Indian tepees, dotted the fields sloping toward the Mississippi, the farmer paid me my wages and again I was homeless; for the work of the year was done.

XIX

MINE NO. 3

I KNEW that I must go up and not down—that I must conserve the place I had reached, at least in my own self-esteem; but where to go and what to do was less easy to decide.

Winter was at hand, the farmers were all discharging their extra help, and much of the money I had earned had gone for suitable clothing. The East was far away, and even if I were able to reach it, there was no certainty that work of any kind could be secured. I knew, from past bitter experience, how little likelihood there was of obtaining the kind of employment which would give me a chance to use the mental tools with which I was equipped, and which had fallen sadly into disuse.

In studying the map of the United States, following with my eye the Mississippi River and its tributaries, I noticed a city which flashed upon my memory the names of some Slovaks whom I had met on the steamer, and who had gone there to mine coal. Hoping that in a city where Slavs congregated, my knowledge of their language might

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be of some use, I decided to make that place my objective point.

The farmer drove me to a neighbouring town where I waited until past midnight, when, taking a belated river boat, I was, for the first time in America, travelling toward a definite goal.

My earliest reading about the Mississippi River was a German illustrated story—in which the artist pictured the river flowing through a jungle of tropical vegetation, with monkeys on the tree-tops throwing cocoanuts at each other.

This phase of natural scenery failed to disclose itself; but a very picturesque element of the journey was the Negro roustabouts who gave me a chance to enlarge my ethnological experience, and brought me face to face with the race question at its most acute angle, making my own problem insignificant in comparison.

To the casual observer, the coloured people are just Negroes; but to me they were a new ethnological exhibit, representing as they did the most primitive type of Guinea Negro, the finest Arabian, and varied mixtures, in which the infusion of Anglo-Saxon blood was the most startling and tragic element.

Frankly, I did not find them objectionable; although we camped on the same deck. Whatever aversion to the Negro I have ever felt, has not

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come from association with him; but rather from association with white men whose attitude of mind acted contagiously upon my own. To me they were a very pleasant variation from the rather monotonous human type which one meets in America, and which, no matter how dissimilar in the beginning, has been shaped into a common likeness by the new and uniform environment.

The Negroes of that Mississippi River boat showed a never-ceasing good nature, expressed in the heartiest laughter; while their weird, rhythmic chant made their hard labour seem a pleasure. Their carefree ways, which not only let the morrow take care of itself, but also forgot the grudges and the trials of yesterday, made them a most interesting type for me to study; while their manifest faults and vices have never presented a sufficient barrier to prevent my seeing in them the altogether human, or keep me from paying them the respect one owes to all humanity.

One cold morning in late Fall I landed in an Illinois city, with fifty miles between me and my goal, and with money enough to take me about half way there, after which it was just a good day's exercise along the railroad track.

The town lay uninvitingly among the coal mines which gave it life. Its geometric streets contained the usual stores with the invariable surplus of

saloons. The residence districts stretched in every direction; while at the most undesirable edges of town the miners had settled in hopeless, unkempt groups. These localities were known as prisoners—merely by numbers, and were fast deteriorating; for the more stable and advanced population of Welsh and German miners was giving way to the changeable, newer, immigrant groups.

The only work I could find immediately, above ground, was in a lumber yard, and I established myself in a boarding house kept in the basement of one of the business blocks in the main street, and so plunged into the sluggish stream of the city's life.

Its upper current, as far as I could feel it, was dominated by two rival newspapers, which, bi-weekly, flung Billingsgate at each other; and a German singing society which met every Sunday afternoon, and in which the drinking and the singing were so mixed that it proved quite distasteful to me.

My greatest attraction was a bakeshop and candy store combined, kept by some diminutive Welshmen who had been pushed up from the mine by the Slav invasion.

The owners were very kind to me, and it was one of them who, on a Sunday evening, took me to his church. The service was in charge of a theo-

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logical student, and the vagueness of his discourse was the only thing which impressed me on that occasion. Having transgressed in the same way, not many years later, I have forgiven him the dull half hour I then endured.

One day a German came to the boarding house, claiming that he had just landed. I took him about town helping him look for work, and at night made a bed for him in the stable of the lumber yard, that being under my especial care. In the morning when I went to attend to my horse I found that it was gone, and with it the best buggy in the barn. As the German was also missing, it was not difficult to know to whom to charge the theft. My employer suspected me of complicity in the affair, and took me to the chief of police. After being closely questioned I was released both from his custody and from my job.

Fortunately, I had previously met the Slovaks with whom I crossed the ocean, and with them I again began life, as a miner. I must confess that the work brought me no joy and I never learned it with any degree of proficiency.

This change removed me somewhat more from the town, necessitating, as it did, my living in an isolated Slovak "patch" near the mine, which I think was known as No. 3. The boarding house was presided over by the wife of one of my fellow-

workmen, and was as neat and clean as a woman could make a house in which from twelve to fifteen men ate and slept, and in which she was also trying to rear her little family.

What made her task more difficult, was the fact that the "patch" seemed to be a law unto itself, as far as cleanliness or even sanitary conditions was concerned. The only time it realized that it was under some government control was, when the officers came to interfere in the not infrequent brawls.

The miners were entirely out of touch with the community, except through the saloons, which were still in the hands of Germans and fairly decent; especially one of them, whose owner rarely stepped behind the bar; and whose children were prohibited from patronizing the place.

The town as a whole was law-abiding and respectable, and its general influence upon the foreign group was good. If there had been some man or group of men who would have brought the community and the strangers into vital relationship, the results might have been far better than they now are.

The number of Slovaks was small enough at that time to have discovered and developed leaders among them. But there, as everywhere else, we were regarded as inferior interlopers and

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treated with contempt. This particular group with which I was associated was made up of a very virile and superior class of men, all of them teachable.

I started English classes among them, wrote their letters, helped them with their shopping, and was limited in my service to them only by lack of time and strength.

They were all deeply religious, or perhaps they were merely punctilious in their religious observances. I regret deeply that I tried to wean them from the church, and that in many cases I succeeded. After all I had nothing better to give them, and the church with its familiar rites and sacraments, rendered them a service which I could not.

These Slovaks belonged to three different churches: The Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox and the Lutheran. The latter group was small and had no minister or church. They were the men mostly easily influenced by me, and were, on the whole, the most intelligent.

I frequently met the priests, very devoted, but narrow-minded men. They were a rare combination of worldliness and other-worldliness which stood them in good stead, keeping them near their flock, and at the same time far removed from it.

A cassock and a cross or an unusual head-dress

are wonderful helps in maintaining priestly dignity, and cast a peculiar spell over the individual, even if he be but an ignorant immigrant. The preacher who wears a business suit in order to be like other men, has thrown aside a valuable aid in his approach to the average man, accustomed to seeing the messenger of God in his robes of office.

I recall attending a Protestant church service, held in the opera house. The preacher was an avowed advocate of labour and its rights. After the sermon he announced his intention of leaving the church and giving himself completely to the cause he championed. This service, in spite of that dramatic incident, lacked all the setting which the foreigner connects with public worship, and I feel reasonably certain that because the appeal of the Evangelical church lacks the ritualistic background, there are comparatively few immigrants affected by it, unless they have come to this country with similar traditions.

Regularly every day except Sunday, I descended into the mine, which was then being worked at a low level, and little by little all the resistance I had felt to this form of labour disappeared; although I never descended without fear, and never saw daylight without joy.

The man with whom I worked, whose helper I was, an uneducated unspoiled Slav of about thirty,

had come, like most of his kind, lured by the high wages. He had left his wife and little children behind, to labour, stint and save, and hoped finally to lift himself above the low social and economic status which was the lot of his class. He talked to me frequently of the pain of the parting and the joyous anticipation of going home. His whole mind was set upon the increase of his savings, and he toiled like a man hungry for his work, as in his stolid way he faced unflinchingly the dangers of the daily task.

We worked in close proximity, rarely being more than ten feet apart. One day I was loading the car when the roof of the chamber gave way. In falling, a huge slab of rock became wedged between the car and a corner of the chamber. The lighter end was on my side and the heavier part fell upon my companion, crushing him beneath its weight. He was taken out alive, lingered a few weeks and died.

It was more than twenty years before I returned to that mine, but I did not descend. Above it in a spacious auditorium, I lectured to some who knew me when, with miner's cap and blackened face, I walked through that city—to many more who did not know that I ever had been there; while a few among the number were of supreme interest to me.

One of them, a Welshman, risen from the mine, had lifted the community with him and permeated it with his practical idealism. His influence was felt in every mine and shop of his state, and even beyond its borders. He was the " strong man, the hiding place in time of storm " for the lesser folk; the man for whom men and communities wait—too often in vain.

Because the men who thus arise are so rare, and the cities blessed by them so few, I shall name both. The man is J. L. Williams, and the place, Streator, Ill.

The other person of special interest to me on my recent visit there was a tall, handsome woman, with a fine American face which showed a Slavic background. She was not sensitive about her age and unhesitatingly recalled incidents of more than twenty years previous; neither was she too proud to speak of her life in the boarding house kept by her mother, near mine No. 3. She was the little Katherina, the Slovak girl grown into an American woman; one of those ethnological miracles of which our country is now so full, and which have never received the attention they deserve. She is the first generation of a new race which will hold in its keeping the weal and woe of our country.

Here are Anglo-Saxon ideals engrafted upon

Slavic stock; the spirit of democracy pulsing in one whose mind is no more enthralled by autocracy and befogged by superstition; a woman whose foremothers were all doubly enslaved, being both serfs and women. Now, this, their descendant is doubly free—woman and enfranchized citizen.

I looked at her with reverence; for she is the potential mother, the guardian of the veiled future. I saw her among the people from whom she had risen, the father and mother who had come so many years before from the Carpathian mountains to the plains of Illinois, and I said: "What hath God wrought!"

Her parents have left the mining patch and the boarding house, and have attained a position from which they can look down in pride, to the level from which they have risen.

Together we walked to the hut in which we all had lived, and each of us gave thanks to God in his own way. We all were grateful that, having served our apprenticeship in the school of poverty and hard labour, we were neither ashamed of the one, nor afraid of the other.

XX

AN IRISH PROVIDENCE

THE first part of the prophecy which made such an impression upon my childish mind had been fulfilled; I had gone to a far country. The second part looked doubtful; as yet I had not married the rich woman nor even met her.

Since the somewhat tragic love affairs of my boyhood, life had been a series of struggles, in which woman played but a small part. Sometimes in the softer moods of my hard life in this country, there rose before me visions of the American girl who, when I was eight years of age, had visited my native town. I had fallen desperately in love with her, and she seemed to reciprocate my affection.

I remembered the name of the city where she lived, and found that it was not far from the place in which I closed my career as a miner. Frequently I thought of going there to renew my boyhood's courtship; but realizing that I was scarcely in a position to appear as the suitor of a

rich young lady I deferred going until the day when good fortune should smile upon me.

But the smile never came. Fortune kept on frowning, and when her frown seemed darkest, I left the mining patch and went to the place where my American playmate lived. The city boasted of being the most wicked in the state, with nine of its "best" citizens in the penitentiary. It possessed a number of other unenviable distinctions which need not be mentioned.

It was a bad city and looked it. The odour of beer and spirits permeated its very atmosphere, and the influence of the liquor traffic was felt in the schools, the courthouse, the synagogue and the church.

The original settlers were Germans, whose descendants, more or less mixed with other nationalities, had deteriorated and were sowing the wild oats which were to bring such an abundant harvest in later years.

I soon learned that the parents of my childhood's love were among the most prominent people in the place, and I did not present myself to renew our old and ardent, if brief courtship. I did go to the factory owned by her father to ask for work. My application was favourably received, and I was assigned a task which required intelligent attention, and kept me employed twelve hours a day.

When the night man did not appear I worked forty-eight hours without intermission, except the time for meals.

The manager of the factory was the owner's son, one of the boys who so uplifted my youthful spirit by climbing to the top of the Maypole. It was a sore temptation to make myself known; especially as he frequently came into the department where I was employed. Once he brought his sister to watch the process of which I had charge. Evidently, she had forgotten all about me; for as I stood there, unconsciously staring at her—trying to trace in her beautiful, mature face the little girl I had known, she called her brother's attention to my rudeness and I received a severe reprimand.

Frequently I passed the house where she lived to catch a glimpse of her, and when I succeeded it was the one uplift of my dull and dreary existence.

That autumn the severe monotony of my life was relieved by the excitement of an election, the first I had witnessed, and which gave me an opportunity to see American politics at their worst.

Interesting, if not convincing, were the trappings of marching clubs, the crash of brass bands and the no less noisy political orators; while the open-handed bribery and corruption did not increase my respect for this country.

Both factory and boarding house were invaded by politicians of all grades; while democracy revelled in shaking hands and passing free cigars and free beer *ad nauseam*.

The owner of the factory ran for alderman, for reasons best known to himself, thus giving the election personal significance.

On the great day when the votes were cast the shop whistles did not blow as early as usual; for the entire force had gone to the polls to vote as directed. I would have had no difficulty in depositing my vote. When it was challenged, some one was ready to swear to my right to the franchise, but on understanding the conditions I voluntarily withdrew.

The whole situation disgusted me. The ballot box, which in visions I had pictured as something holy enough to be beautiful, and precious enough to be carefully protected, proved to be a mean looking receptacle wedged in between a barber shop and a saloon; with the worst element of the community seeming to have charge of its affairs—but not guarding its purity.

The results of the local election were foreknown and properly celebrated. The elated citizens marched from saloon to brothel and back again, rejoicing with the denizens of the under world who were most happy over the returns.

As for the factory, it seemed fairly to reel the morning after the election, for every one was more or less under the influence of liquor. At the boarding house the day began with a quarrel and ended in a free fight between the Irish and the Germans, who had been antagonists at the ballot box.

One evening that winter, having replenished my wardrobe and gained sufficient courage to drop my *incognito*, I presented myself with a loudly beating heart, at the home of my employer. He did not seem especially glad to see me, I confess; but worst of all his daughter had forgotten all about me. She did not even remember kissing me good-bye; or the solemn promise she had made to wait for me. In view of these disconcerting facts it was no shock to hear that she was engaged to be married.

Frankly, while I was not broken-hearted because of the fickleness of the young lady, my pride was deeply wounded by her indifference. My employer and his wife grew more cordial as the evening advanced, and when I made my adieus I was invited to dine with them on the following Sunday, when my affairs would be discussed in the hope of finding a position more suited to my education. My acceptance of the invitation gave me the opportunity of meeting all the family and feeling the

currents of thought and action which governed it.

The house, located in one of the best streets, was typically American in its furnishings; while the young people whom I had known as children in the Old Country had grown into typical American men and women, but with a noticeable element of coarseness in their make-up which was most unpleasant.

The parents felt strong loyalty for the little town beyond the seas, and inquired about everything and everybody. They had not forgotten their poor relatives whom gradually they had brought to America, most of them living near by.

They still clung to Jewish traditions, going to the synagogue at least twice a year: New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement, and they never failed to remember the anniversaries of their dead.

Generous and kindly, they had won for themselves the esteem of the community, although they scarcely rose above its ethical level. They were what others were, and did what others did. They broke good laws, helped to make bad ones, and never did anything which their friends and neighbours disapproved. It did not take me long to realize that our ideals were diametrically opposed, and that we had nothing in common. When I saw my fair one vigorously chewing gum, and heard her using slang—my lingering admiration van-

ished. When I asked her whether she loved Carlyle—and she told me that his name was not Carlyle, but Leopold—I was more than reconciled to her having forgotten and forsaken her first love.

Her parents agreed that I ought not to return to the factory. They saw very quickly that I had no taste or talent for business, and after discussing various possibilities suggested my studying law. While I was giving my reasons for not wishing to enter that profession, the young lady said, half in jest, "He talks like a rabbi."

All the family approved her observation, and it was suggested that I ought to enter a Hebrew college to prepare myself for the calling for which they had so suddenly decided that I was eminently fitted.

Then I told them my religious views, which at that time were unfixed and at variance with orthodox Judaism; but that seemed to them no serious obstacle. The college, they said, was under the auspices of reformed Jews who did not demand doctrinal conformity.

There was also held out a hope of securing me a position as an instructor. This latter possibility was more in harmony with my desires than becoming a rabbi.

A week passed during which I worked faithfully in the factory. On the following Sunday I

was told that negotiations had progressed sufficiently for me to go to the college and begin my studies. The distance was great enough for me to accept an opportunity to make the journey on a cattle train, which insured not only a free trip, but earning a not inconsiderable sum besides. My friends were interested in the sale of the cattle, and a certain number of cars was intrusted to me. My duty consisted in keeping the cattle from lying down, as they were likely to smother one another. A long prod was the only tool required.

So I started for the East, an educational career and a possible rabbinate, by way of a cattle train.

There were several other men in the caboose, whose duties were like my own with this difference: They were professionals, while I was an interloping amateur, who had kept one of their number out of a job. I was made to feel my place as soon as I came among them, and every possible obstacle was put in my way, to prevent me from performing my duty properly.

At every station the men left the caboose to inspect their cars and prod the reclining cattle into an upright position. At one station the cars, having been switched around, were out of the order in which I had first seen them. This confused me and I prodded the other men . . . tle, while my

own were piling on top of each other. When the danger of their suffocating was at its height, I was told that they were my own particular kine. Then my tormentors stood by laughing at my frantic efforts to save the animals. I asked for help, which was forthcoming only by my paying well for it, so a good part of my earnings went to the rescuers of my cattle.

There was one Irish lad in the group who belonged to that species called "low down" Irish. His wit was vitriolic and his delight in my sufferings made him invent new cruelties every hour. He compelled me to treat him and his comrades to drink, and when he discovered that I had a twenty-dollar gold piece in my pocket easily possessed himself of it. Foolishly I threatened to have him arrested when we arrived at our destination, and that made him anxious to prevent my reaching it.

One evening as I was running on top of the train, going in haste to my cars, I ran against this Irishman, or rather against his outstretched foot, which tripped me, and I fell off the car. As I struck the ground something seemed to snap in my leg. I could not rise, and although I cried loudly for help, the noise of the engine and the grinding of the wheels drowned my voice. The train moved on, leaving me nearly a hundred miles from the

college, and a great many thousand miles from becoming a rabbi.

That experience, painful and distressing as it was, had among other things this result: whenever I think of the Irish, involuntarily that particularly bad Irishman rises before me, and I have to compel myself to believe that they are not all like him.

And yet, in the light of subsequent events, although this Irishman robbed me and gave me a twisted leg, when I met him again I felt like thanking him for his cruelty to me. Knowing the indirect results of his persecutions, one might almost believe that he was the instrument of the Divine Providence—and who can say that he was not?

XXI

A TURNING POINT

THE limping gait with which I approached the little town, that may as well be called Bethlehem, was not at all indicative of the pace with which important events were to precipitate themselves; events which were to change and permanently shape the current of my life.

The town was like countless others dotting the Middle West. It had its courthouse square flanked by the usual variety of stores, its few hundred houses and about two thousand people who lived together, still fairly unconscious of class distinctions. Even the age-old barrier between Jew and Gentile was intangible enough to permit unrestrained social contact.

A philanthropic Jewish woman, one of the town's social leaders, to whose notice my case was brought, took me into her home, and not only nursed me back to health, but proved a most loyal and generous friend. She procured me a clerical position, the only kind which I was then capable of filling.

Here, then, after long wandering, I found a

home and friends. I came in touch with cultured people, and had sufficient leisure to gather up and restore the broken and tangled threads of my intellectual and spiritual life.

I doubt that I was a good clerk. I came into the world with little or no business sense, and barter was always more distasteful to me than the hardest, commonest labour; yet I think I proved of some value to my employer, if only as an advertisement.

I established a small library in the back of the store, which attracted considerable attention, and my first savings went into a microscope which had the place of honour in the room I had rented above the store, and was the centre around which I gathered a Natural Science Club. There were always people coming and going with whom I formed valuable friendships. They came because they thought I had something to give them, but they brought a great deal into my life.

Perhaps the group of people which influenced me most strongly at first was a number of public school teachers, who organized a modern language and literature class, which I taught.

This class met in the homes of its members, most of whom were the wives of prominent business and professional men; Jews and Gentiles. In

that way I came in vital touch with the American home which, perhaps, is at its very best in these scattered towns of the Middle West. A set of Shakespeare, presented to me by my pupils, is still the most highly prized of all the volumes in my library.

Later, a few of the elect read philosophy together. We began in a modest way with Watts, "On the Mind," followed by Spencer's "Education." These, no doubt, were in the teachers' course of reading. There were three of these teachers, all of them bachelor maids, who were the backbone of the intellectual life of the community.

Among them began the development of my really religious life, which had passed through so many phases, and which at that time was probably at its lowest ebb. In this group of women I saw the fruits of religion: An honest culture, strong character and a spirit of service which proved more convincing than the many and ingenious arguments with which they met my assaults upon their faith.

Deep down in my life, almost buried, was a spiritual hunger, of which I was then becoming conscious, and which my Jewish friends did not and could not satisfy. The kindest people I have ever known—they gave me all they had to give;

but spiritually they could not contribute to my life, nor I to their life.

The social activities of the Jewish people (with the exception of the family which first befriended me) were completely dominated by card playing, and of religion nothing remained; not even the conventional observances of their faith.

The older people were distinctly superior to their children; but as their viewpoint and mine were far apart, I was entirely separated from them in my inner life, so it was the Gentiles of the community with whom I came most vitally in touch.

The relation between the Gentiles and Jews in Bethlehem was so exceedingly cordial that it was not unusual for the Jews to attend the Christian churches, and my frequent presence there created no comment.

I was especially attracted to a church whose self-sacrificing pastor and his wife were, and still are to me, most convincing examples of the Christian life.

He and I argued frequently about religion. I was then writing for a German freethinking paper, and used my discussions with him as the basis of my articles. This marked the beginning of such literary career as I have had.

As with the teachers, so with the preacher. His

most effective arguments were the serenity and simplicity of his life and the sterling qualities of his character. The Christian atmosphere of his home completely captivated me.

I joined a Sunday school class and still recall some of the warm discussions which arose because of my presence, and which lifted the class out of its usual monotony.

Quite casually I was led into certain activities which were to become characteristic of my later life.

My friend the minister, a group of Gentile boys and myself were back of a movement which culminated in the organization of a public reading room, at the opening of which I made my first address in English. At that time also I began my work for the immigrants.

The town was situated at the junction of two railroads, and it was the custom then, as it is now, to send immigrants the longest and poorest way from the East. They had to change cars at Bethlehem, and came into the town in a pitiable plight. My first case was a Swiss family, with so many children that they were tied together to keep them from being lost. I took them to the hotel, but they were too poor and too numerous to be desirable guests, so I arranged with my minister and his wife to lodge and feed them until they

found work and a shelter, a service which was gladly rendered.

By this time my linguistic ability was known to the town officials, and one day they brought me a Ruthenian who could not make himself understood. When I addressed him in his own language, he fell upon my neck from joy. He had been exploited by a farmer who had kept him at work during eight months, and when the man demanded wages sent him away penniless. Strong feeling was aroused against the farmer and he was sued. The jury allowed the Ruthenian twenty-five dollars a month, which made him a rich man. He had been out of touch with his wife and children because he could not write. I wrote to them and had the pleasure of welcoming them when they arrived in the city.

A lecture course brought me in contact with a number of American men of the idealistic type who enriched my life, not only by their public addresses, but also by the many hours they gave me in private conversation and conference. One of the most indulgent of these lecturers, who permitted me to be with him until his train was due after midnight, was President Jordan, then of the State University of Indiana.

In a few days he sent Professor Von Jageman of the German department to interview me. It

was a coincidence, no doubt, that he had gone through an apprenticeship similar to my own, in this country, so he proved exceedingly sympathetic and helpful. He offered me a position as assistant in his department, but before I could decide to accept his offer my life was directed into quite another channel.

My outward opposition to religion was growing daily less violent, and the type of Christian life with which I came in contact proved exceedingly attractive. Its theology still seemed irrational, and was absolutely unsympathetic; but the Christ, that rigid wooden form nailed to the cross which I had so long known, and as a child repelled me; while as a youth it never drew me—began to look human. His artificial halo disappeared. I saw Him walking among men, and began to feel His power.

The face lost its stern sadness, and the features resembled those of the consecrated minister or his devoted wife. Again I saw the face of Tolstoy, whose touch upon my life had never been lost. If lives like these were projected into the world of strife and injustice, out of which I had come, would they not accomplish more than those which hurl back the hate with which they have been pelted?

Thus I began to reason, and great changes com-

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menced within me. I was hungry for spiritual relationship with that Christ Whose love I dimly felt, and Whose tragic life and death I at last faintly understood. Unfortunately, however, there were what I considered unsurmountable obstacles in the way of openly attesting my allegiance to Him. All my Christian friends believed in some inner change, volcanic and revolutionary, which must follow confession of sin and a desire for salvation.

I felt no sense of guilt, neither had I any desire for salvation from an eternal hell. I felt the guilt of all the world and my sense of sin as a part of it. I desired salvation, not for myself alone, but for the world I knew to be in need of it. Nor had I any ecstatic experience which would match that of my friends who had "come to Christ" as they expressed it.

And yet, after my first conscious prayer, something came into my life and claimed it—the whole of it. I felt a communion with something humanly great; but greater than any human I had ever known. It came like the quiet which steals into the midst of a storm at sea, when the ship lifts and groans, then rights herself, finds her course and moves again into the face of the abating tempest.

The experience of those mystical moments became the supreme one in my religious life; as if I

had waited and struggled and suffered, just for that. Had I lived in a less rationalistic age, or were myself more a mystic than I am, it might have lifted me to the very heavens. As it was, I was left stumbling upon the earth, with obstacles left in my path.

I was still a Jew and all the members of my family were loyal to their faith. Then, too, I had a horror of the so-called converted Jew, who often changes his faith from convenience and not from conviction. I had never happened to meet a sincere one, and often told my minister, that if I ever met or even heard of a Jew genuinely converted, it would greatly help me to make my decision.

Here let me say a word regarding my Gentile friends. At no time did they press their faith upon me, and discussions on the subject of religion were always begun upon my own initiative.

My final determination to take the momentous step was brought about by an event which transpired in the Jewish home which had first sheltered me, and where I was a guest at dinner every Sunday.

On this particular Sunday I found there a relative of the hostess, a teacher in a woman's college in a neighbouring state. She was spending the last few days of her vacation in Bethlehem.

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Never before had I met a young woman with whom I could discuss so freely art, literature, even my own religious struggle, and great was my astonishment when I discovered that she was a Christian, the child of parents of Jewish birth, who very early in their married life had become Christian and had devoted their lives to the kind of service which seemed to me the most attractive phase of that religion.

Two problems found their solution in this meeting. First, I had now heard of Jews whose conversion was genuine. From a worldly point of view these people had lost much, because of their change of faith. Secondly, their own relatives did not doubt the sincerity of their belief and that branch of the family represented by my hostess, maintained amicable relations with those who had accepted Christ.

That night was one of struggle—much of it, the hardest with my baser self.

I tried to find a way through the confusion of ideas and the mixture of motives. I wanted to verify my mystical experience; but I was left to myself, with my feet on the ground and my eyes directed toward my own purposeless existence. I travelled over it all again and again; a trail of labour and sorrow.

At one end of it the mother who bore me in

bodily and mental agony; at the other end this homeless and useless self about to swerve again.

Should I cut myself loose from a race and its traditions, and in doing so wound all those who were flesh of my flesh?

Dared I wound her most, who loved me most, and who at that moment did not know of the conditions under which I lived and thought me quite different and a much better man than I was?

It was a night of mental and physical torture, and with the morning there came no peace, but a decision. Before many weeks I resumed my journey, for the first time with a great purpose and a goal.

XXII

THE SCHOOL OF THE RABBIS

A FEW years ago I was in the midwestern city from which I had started for the Rabbinical College that I never reached. I visited the old haunts: The Irish boarding house, and the factory, where I helped change corn into genuine maple syrup. Perhaps the most interesting episode of that day was a visit to the lady of my boyhood's dream, now happily married and the mother of many children.

In passing through the railroad yards near which the factory is located, I saw an Irishman, whose flaming red hair was more conspicuous than the red disk of the switch he turned. He looked familiar enough for me to address him by a name which was not Patrick, and to which he responded. He did not recognize his former fellow-traveller, nor did he care to recall his brutal treatment of me until I told him that he was a wonderful switchman to whom I owed much. By tripping me and giving me a twisted leg, he had switched my whole destiny, not only to another track, but onto a different road.

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I had started for a Rabbinical College with a wrecked faith and but little hope or courage; I went instead to a Presbyterian Theological Seminary, with a buoyant faith, a fresh enthusiasm, and a consuming passion to tell other men the way to the new hope and the new life.

I doubt that men who have seen the heavenly light at noonday are fit candidates for theological seminaries. A fervent convert and Hodge's Theology; a bubbling spirit and science and exegesis; a passion for men, and Biblical criticism, ought not to meet too soon. They were about as stimulating to me, as the contemplation of the household budget would be to a newly wedded pair.

Added to the formal and critical atmosphere of the seminary, I found its faculty hopelessly disrupted by the higher criticism, and one of its members on trial for heresy. There was open and expressed hostility; the spirit of the classroom was inimical rather than inspirational; while the brotherly love and forbearance which I hoped to find in abundance were so lacking, that I had to seek an outlet for my own emotional life, which was in danger of being stifled.

The church, which was close enough to the seminary to be regarded as the cathedral of the denomination, was, if possible, more divided and less sympathetic; while the chief mission of the

pulpit seemed to be to condemn the higher criticism and its advocates.

I attended that church but once, for it reminded me too much of the orthodox synagogue. Its spirit was rabbinical rather than religious, and of that Christianity, that Divine passion which I believed it ought to impart, I felt little or nothing.

I suppose I was as much to blame as the church, for I was walking on clouds, while the church was propelling itself over hard, tangible cobblestones, which later I had to cross myself with jolt and jar. At that time, however, I was not ready for them. To use a Biblical but somewhat mixed metaphor, I was a "babe in Christ," and the church was quarrelling over the milk supply.

However, I found a real church, or rather, the church found me. It was one of those citadels of faith about to be surrendered to business. In the basement a commission merchant had already established himself, and it was merely a matter of a short time until the church auditorium would be given over to cabbages, watermelons and other perishable things for the body, while the imperishable things of the Spirit would have to be housed in the more congenial if less needy suburbs.

The pastor was a saint—an Old Testament saint with a New Testament halo; a covenanter with the heart of a St. John, the beloved disciple. He

preached an uncompromising Calvinism in the spirit of the Beatitudes. The old church looked like a mausoleum, and when he rose to preach, his spare, ascetic figure, with a dingy wall for its background, was scarcely visible to his depleted and loyal flock. Good, plain, middle-class folk of Scotch-Irish blood and training—real Israelites, “in whom there was no guile,” made up the congregation. They sang David’s Psalms in long and short and mixed metre—dolefully and without musical accompaniment; after which they listened patiently for an hour, while their pastor expounded the Scripture.

I was invited to assist him and help rejuvenate the aging and dying church. The breadth of this man’s spirit is shown by the fact that he intrusted to me his prayer meeting and gave me permission to keep the church open every evening for Gospel meetings. He did this without examining me in theology or homiletics, trusting only to the spirit which he believed animated me. I had a naive courage, much enthusiasm and a real love for people. I knew absolutely nothing about how to make religious addresses or how to conduct meetings. I opened the empty church and for a week I was the only one in it. This, in spite of the fact that I had handbills printed which I personally distributed.

The second week I determined to "compel them to come in." The region in which the church was located had gone through that pathetic transition from stately home to boarding house, and at that time was in its last stages, beginning to be illumined by red lights and darkened by grossest vice.

I marked out a district of about thirty blocks, and carrying a load of Bibles and tracts, started to work my parish, selling Bibles or giving them away, while inviting people to my meetings. Although I still attended my classes in the theological seminary, I did it less than half-heartedly; but I started out on my new errand, with an apostle's faith and courage.

Unhesitatingly I can say that, for me, the tramping through wretched tenements, the contact with poverty, ignorance and vice, the discovery of oases of faith, virtue and cleanliness in the most untoward environment, were of more value than my attendance in the classroom. I explored a hell, more real than any theology can paint it. I saw five-story tenements, the basements dingy and damp, never safe from a coming flood and never free from the moisture of the last one. I visited garrets, hot and stuffy, rooms crowded like stables and not as wholesome, where brutal husbands were abusing their wives and often both of them beat each other in drunken fury.

There was a stretch of about eight blocks closest to my church, the hovels of which I would not now have courage to enter, nor would I send a young man there, no matter how fixed his character or how holy his errand. To preach to the dead in Sheol would be safer and easier, yet I am quite sure that there I did true disciple's service, in comparison with which all other work I have done fades into insignificance.

How was I received?

In most places gladly, in some derisively and in a few ejected forcibly.

"What, Bibles in a brothel?" This with a mocking laugh; but the painted face could not hide a touch of sadness, as if the sight of a Bible had brought back memories of a yet untainted life. She was in the mood for talking, and that night she was at my meeting.

A few years after, walking across the streets of that city, suddenly I felt a hand upon my arm. Turning I saw a woman carrying a market basket. Her face was not beautiful, but maternal, sweet and honest. I did not recognize her. She proved to be the woman of the brothel, the Magdalene, restored to herself and to her people. I have received many great rewards in one form or another but none so great as the gratitude of this woman.

During that period I not only explored the real

hell, I found also the real heaven. I recall a tenement house worse than anything I hope ever to see again. Fortunately its type is no longer tolerated. Whole floors were merely stalls in which poverty and vice had chained men and women to their troughs. It was a bedlam of curses and vicious odours—hell outdone, yet in that house I came upon a door opening into a room white and clean. A few pictures hung upon the walls and on a dresser lay some books. A small organ stood in a corner and from a sweet, saintly-looking woman came a cordial greeting. The room seemed to me like an altar erected in the midst of hell; like a bit of heaven dropped into that sulphurous abyss to sweeten it. This woman also came to my meetings, and her room became a place of intercession for the sins of many.

A Jewish girl with the fighting spirit of a Deborah drifted in and stayed. She now lives the Gospel among the coloured people in the South.

A drunken tramp printer snatched my Bible hungrily and begged me to pull him out of the thraldom of his sin. I never catalogued nor counted the men and women who came to those meetings, but they rise before me now unbidden, and I wish their number were larger and my share in their redemption greater.

The meetings were unique enough to attract

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some of my fellow-students from the seminary, and we called it among ourselves, "The Church of the Precious Fragments." I am sure that those of us who did the work received more than we gave. My talks, as I remember them, were too emotional, and they probably neither helped nor hindered; but the blessed fellowship, the sympathy, the desire to help and the presence of the Spirit did the work.

Not only were the people we gathered in benefited; the dear old minister sounded a fresh note in his sermons, the young people of the congregation had a broader vision and the tomb-like church was brightened by a new light.

Strange to say, the very thing which should have made the church live, killed it, or at least hastened its end. The few people who "paid the piper" would not come into a church polluted nightly by the presence of our "precious fragments." They said they feared for their children.

One evening, after meeting, the minister asked me to accompany him to his home, where, after a long and agonizing season of prayer, he told me that the meetings must stop and why. I could not sleep that night; the old doubts arose, stronger than ever. I began to question everything, even my own motives, and I returned in the morning to the seminary fully determined to sever my con-

nection with it and to abandon my preparation for the ministry. When I reached the classroom I was told that a stranger had inquired for me and that he would return at noon.

He was an English Jew of a high degree of culture and a great deal of wealth, both consecrated completely and uncompromisingly to the cause of Christ. I am sure that the Christ spirit enveloped him more than any man I have ever met. He was a disciple who knew no "ifs" or "buts" to the Divine command, who accepted literally and unqualifiedly the teachings of Jesus, hazarding his all upon his childlike faith. His motives were as single as his mind was simple, and his life as pure as I have often wished my own to be.

The one subject upon which we did not agree was his absolute faith in the Jewish national ideal. He believed in the second coming of the Messiah, the establishment of the millennial reign and that the Jews were to be the vehicle of this desired consummation. His faith became a sort of fanaticism, and he lavished a fortune in trying to further the Divine plan by writing pamphlets, verses and books which he printed at his expense. He had a wonderful banner painted, with the Lion of Judah and the cross of Christ, symbolizing the New Kingdom.

I could not share this faith. To me humanity was more than Judaism, and Christianity not de-

pendent upon the conversion of any race. I felt myself a new creature, related to every other creature, and his Judaic Christianity was to me as repellent as the Christian Judaism of the seminary; so we frankly disagreed. My contact with this man taught me not to label men, for although he seemed to me narrow and fanatical, he was broad enough and genuine enough to drop the discussion of his peculiar ideas and try to comfort me in my distress of mind.

When he discovered how uncongenial the atmosphere of the seminary was to me, he suggested another one of which he had heard and offered me all the financial aid I needed. Unhesitatingly I should put him among the few Christians I know who unflinchingly accepted all the consequences of his faith. He was born either too late or too soon; he belongs with Paul or in some crises not yet reached. He has travelled through the whole world, preaching the second coming of Christ, urging Jews to make ready and Gentiles to pray for their conversion. He never asked a penny nor received one; he spent several fortunes in the cause so dear to his heart and is now somewhere spending himself. I never could believe in all he did, but I envied him his spirit.

One day I left the classroom determined not to return, for I knew I could never preach the doc-

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trine I was being taught, and the little of the new spirit left in me was chilling to death. My goal was the seminary my new friend had mentioned, and there I went, again penniless, knowing no one either there or on the way. Looking back, I am sure that the great Leader was guiding me.

XXIII.

THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

AN ordinary town means nothing unless one has a friend in it. This may certainly be said of the average town in the Middle West, where each one is a miniature Chicago, with its monotonous business streets and its more or less pretentious residences. The towns beautiful for situation are rare and those of some historic interest, rarer still.

The one which I reached, in which I had no friend, was so permeated by the Spirit, that no matter in how many ways it may have resembled other myriads of towns of three thousand inhabitants or thereabouts, its atmosphere was distinctive, and one's mind must have been gross indeed, not to become conscious of it immediately. There was a Sabbath-like solemnity in the air; although the streets leading to the various college buildings were crowded by young people hurrying to and from their classes.

The place impressed me strangely. I felt like a fugitive who, having finally reached the city

of refuge, was ready to claim sanctuary. I had not the slightest idea to whom to turn, or what I should say when I found the man who cou'd open or shut the door; admit me or drive me back into my planless life.

For hours I walked up and down those streets, looking wistfully into the doors and windows of the college buildings. At five o'clock the bells tolled for chapel and I followed the great stream of students into a barnlike structure, which was soon filled. I stood at the door during the short and impressive service. The hymn, sung by a thousand or more voices, lifted me above myself, and I forgot that I was hungry and homeless. One of the professors read a chapter which has remained my favourite Scripture lesson to this day. I have read it and reread it, until it has become the most worn page of my Bible. It is the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. He did not read it with much emphasis, and the crowd of students did not listen very eagerly. Why should they? It meant but little to him or to them.

"So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints."

Frequently I wish for my students that boon of hearing for the first time some great passage of the New Testament; for while they never hear that

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Book too frequently, their ears are dulled to its beauty and power, because of a superficial familiarity with it. To me it was new, and the words came with a peculiar force, satisfying a peculiar need. I was a stranger and a sojourner and had been for what seemed many years. I was eager for fellowship, and above my physical hunger there rose the hunger for friends.

During the supper hour I again walked the streets, now silent and deserted. I had not sufficient courage to even ask a question of the many merry groups, when the street once more was enlivened by them. I was finally driven by the dark and chill to accost a man. As he approached me from under the dim light of a street lamp, I asked him where I should go to inquire about admission to the Theological Seminary. Replying to my question he told me he was dean of that institution. He asked me to come to his home, which necessitated retracing his steps, and after a brief conversation I was assured of a hearty and brotherly welcome.

It is difficult to know how to regard such strange coincidences as those which developed during my interview with the dean. I hesitate to call them special providences. I have no right to claim a readjustment of the machinery of the universe to my needs; yet it must have been a little more than

mere chance that this man was just the man to meet, not only because he was the one in authority, but because he was remarkably fitted to understand me. He was a New Englander with a German mind, having taken his Ph.D. at Leipzig. He knew most of my teachers and I knew his. We had much in common mentally, but that which especially endeared him to me was the fact that he treated me as a human being and not as one of a peculiar species.

I asked one great favour of him; that I was not to be brought to the special attention of the students. I dreaded and still dread the kind of notoriety which too often clings to a convert. I merely asked for the same chance and the same treatment that every other student would get. He made the promise and of course kept it. Quite naturally I have remained devotedly attached to this man; although every one of my teachers proved to be a loyal friend to whom I am bound by the sincerest gratitude. Not only were they good teachers, they were the type of men whom I needed. They strengthened my belief in the new faith; they were living epistles whom it was good for me to read.

My professor of Hebrew did much more for me than merely help polish up my Hebrew grammar. He disclosed to me the genius of the Hebrew

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prophets, he stirred within me whatever spiritual gifts I inherit from my race and to him I owe a fairly well governed pride in that inheritance. One of the special tasks upon which he put me, was to compare the books of Chronicles with the other historical books covering that period. While that plunged me into the heart of the problem of the higher criticism, I came out unscathed, for his view, although then very conservative, was broad and rich and unafeard.

I owe a great deal to my professor of Homiletics, the gentlest of all teachers, who understood great preachers of Christendom and brought me in vital contact with them. So far as I know, no one has ever succeeded in teaching other men to preach, but he succeeded in conveying to me in what spirit to preach. While I have long ago forgotten the minutia of sermon-making as he taught it, I have always felt his spirit and have tried to follow its leadings.

How deep the impression which that whole period made upon me is proved by the fact that I still remember the first sermon I heard him preach. The text was, "And looking steadfastly into Heaven he saw God." The stoned Stephen, staggering beneath the assaults of his enemies, after he declared to them his faith and their unfaithfulness. I very much fear that, in one way or the other, the

sermons of my early ministry were weak imitations of this teacher's.

I also studied systematic theology, but in a very unsystematic way, for he who taught it was more than a theologian; he was a man who radiated his teachings. His central thought was that God is beneficent, and that whatever does not harmonize with the Divine attribute of beneficence is not Divine. It was a theology which seemed especially designed for me, and, although I remember nothing more than that one great fact upon which his systematic theology rested, it seems to me even to-day the one attribute of God regarding which I am absolutely sure, and it has remained the central theme of my preaching.

A most loyal and lovable soul tried to teach me the art of public speaking. This also is one of the things impossible to teach, and he knew it. I do not know now, and I think I never knew, a single trick of that most subtle art. He made me hate mere words. "Have something to say and say it," is the only rule of this teacher which I remember.

There were other professors who did their share in teaching me to loathe every sham, especially the religious sham; to be myself always, when that self had something worth while to express, to be fearless but without venom; to love men without

enervating sentimentality, and to be loyal to the truth at whatever personal cost.

Besides the faculty, I found in the seminary a body of fellow-students who, all unconsciously, helped in educating me. A spirit of heroism pervaded the whole group; a simple genuineness which was exceedingly attractive to me.

The second Sunday of my residence in the seminary I went out to preach. The journey was not undertaken "*per pedes apostolorum*," but in a more muscular way, *per handcar*, which four theologues propelled over a track leading to a stone quarry. There was a touch of danger about this trip, for the track was poor and it led over high trestles which made me dizzy and revived painful memories of a similar journey taken under quite different conditions.

The congregation, which had gathered in an abandoned schoolhouse, was exceedingly unfriendly. I do not remember what I talked about; I do know that the "heathen raged" and that we had to rush to the handcar. It had been lifted from the track and was reposing in a deep ditch, so the persecuted apostolic band had to find its way back afoot, through the dark, the high trestles being traversed on all-fours for safety.

A short time after I started on a new and still more heroic errand. The movement now known

as the Anti-Saloon League had its small beginning at that time and in that place. I was one of its earliest agitators and was asked to carry the message of prohibition into a nearby township known, I think, as Russia. I was chosen for this particular territory because it was inhabited by German farmers, to whom I was to preach the gospel of temperance in the English tongue. In those days I had much zeal and little discretion, so I "rushed in where angels feared to tread."

I went to Russia, carried there by a horse which was a local celebrity. It belonged to a missionary from Africa, who was spending his declining years in the congenial atmosphere of the college town. He himself was past the days when he could actively further the cause, but his horse, being still able to walk, was dedicated to the service, and upon its corrugated back I undertook the dangerous journey. Walking would have been preferable, but the roads were impassable for foot passengers; even the horse was barely able to plough its way through the sticky mud.

Much the worse for wear, I arrived at the schoolhouse where the meeting was to be held. Every inch of available space was occupied by a crowd which showed its hostility as soon as I entered. I was greeted by a shower of decayed vegetables, and when I tried to speak I could not

make myself heard above the din and roar. Instead of delivering a temperance address, I was compelled to listen to a speech by the Lutheran pastor, who compared me to Judas, for "was not I, a German, ready to betray the cause of personal liberty for thirty pieces of silver"?

The truth of the matter was that I did not get thirty pieces of silver or anything else for my fruitless errand, nor had I expected any reward. My ardour was cooled, however, and I no more attempted to preach prohibition to Germans.

For a time I supplied the pulpits of various pastorless churches with more or less success, but that routine of work did not appeal to me. I thirsted for a really hard task, and before long I got it.

Somewhere out in the country, a hundred or more miles from the seminary, two churches were to be reopened. They had been closed because of local quarrels. A certain faction composed of one man and his immediate family wanted to have absolute control of all the affairs of their church, and because the community did not agree to that, the church had been closed for five or six years. Recently it had been reopened, although no one but the man and his family attended it.

The other church was in a place where the people had suffered such spiritual decline that they

could not or would not open it. A colleague of mine who had begun holding services in both places magnanimously offered me this golden opportunity for heroic service, and without hesitation I accepted it. The remuneration was to be ten dollars a Sunday, and out of that I was to pay my railroad fare, which amounted to over six dollars. I mention this lest I be accused of having gone after the "loaves and fishes."

The first Saturday night I landed after dark, in a sea of mud, at the railroad station. As the train moved off, a man carrying a lantern came shambling out of the shadows and in a very gruff voice greeted me thus:

"Be you the preacher?"

When I pleaded guilty, he asked me to mount one of two horses standing near. After two hours' jolting through half-frozen mud, we arrived at an isolated farmhouse where the "boss" of the church lived with his family. Cold, stiff, sore and altogether miserable, I was conducted to the garret, where I spent the night in a bed over which the snow had drifted.

In the morning my host conducted me to the dooryard, where I performed my ablutions, assisted by the pump, a cake of laundry soap and the family towel, which was far from immaculate and almost too frozen to use. After a very greasy

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breakfast we all drove over to a small settlement where the church was situated. In vain one of the boys rang the bell; no one came to answer its summons, so the "boss," his family and their preacher had the church all to themselves.

I remained in town after the service, wishing to canvass the situation, but although I went from house to house, no door opened to me, for I was an enemy—the "boss's preacher"—and they would have nothing to do with me.

Dinnerless, I went to my second appointment, where I found a good congregation of farmers' lads and lassies as well as members of the younger townsfolk, to whom the service was a diversion. I announced a hymn which was not sung, as no one was willing to play the melodeon. I read the Scripture, the only part of the service in which I succeeded, for when I began to pray, one by one, my congregation departed, and the Amen found me in full possession of an empty church. Not quite so empty either, for some one had put a nest of chilled wasps by the hot stove. As they thawed, they took possession of the church and drove away my congregation. I, too, did not "stand on the order of my going."

In spite of the discouraging beginning, for more than a year I travelled the hundred miles back and forth, through cold and heat, serving these

churches, making many mistakes, the recollection of which makes me shudder, winning a few friends and I hope doing some good. To these, my first preaching stations, I have returned frequently, under happier circumstances, but never with a holier zeal or less thought of self than in those young days when preaching was not only a real passion but a new experience and when my net income per week was: Three dollars and sixty cents.

XXIV

FROM ALIEN TO CITIZEN

SOME time ago, it devolved upon me to guide through a portion of this country a Royal Commission from Germany that came to study some of our social problems, and the institutions which have been created to meet them or to solve them. What most astonished the members of the Commission was the idealistic current of our national life. One of them frankly confessed that he had always believed us to be the most materialistic and practical people in the world.

"When we landed in New York," he said, "we spent a sleepless night in one of your gigantic hotels, in rooms which faced three busy corners. Above them, high in air, were three huge and ingenious electric signs, compelling our attention. At one corner we saw the face of a woman emerging out of the night, winking her right eye as she disappeared and reappeared.

"Over the second corner a large whiskey bottle emptied its flaming contents into a glass, renewing the process every few minutes.

"The most wonderful sign was that which

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seemed to completely cover the heavens. It represented a chariot race. Fierce, fiery, tramping steeds were urged on by a reckless driver standing in his chariot; but while its wheels moved faster and faster, it never reached the goal.

"Those three signs appeared to us to represent the American spirit. The woman who seems to rule everything, the whiskey which symbolizes your love of pleasure, and the horses, the rush of tramping trade.

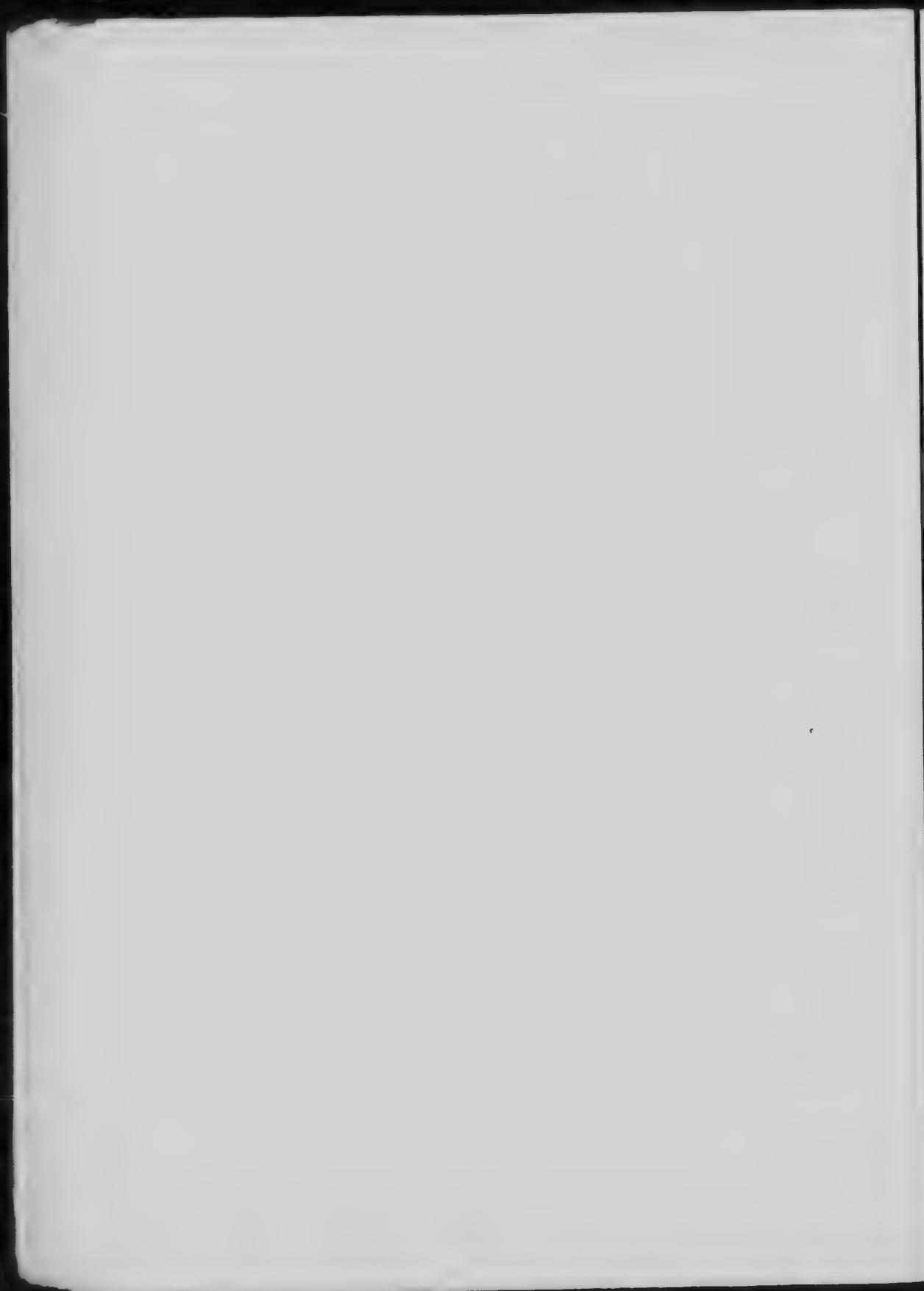
"Since that first impression, however, we have discovered that the unseen and unadvertised forces are stronger here than we believed. We have ceased to be startled by your materialistic symbols; but each day brings its new surprises in the sphere of ideals."

Such a judgment passed by keen students of abnormal social phenomena, was exceedingly gratifying to me; for long ago I realized that fact, which was first impressed upon me in the little college town, where I discovered the real and the less known America.

Founded upon an ideal, the town was put down into a flat, uninviting, uninspiring landscape, which offered no commercial advantages whatever. It did give brave men a chance to build a community in which to realize their ideals, a college through which to propagate them and a church



DURING SEMINARY DAYS



wherein to keep them vitalized by contact with God. The three—community, college and church—were so blended that one scarcely knew where one began and the other ended. Work, education and religion were steeped in an atmosphere of prayer; while fanaticism, narrow-mindedness and hypocrisy, if they existed, and no doubt they were there, never dominated.

While life may have been sombre, the real joys were not crowded out; for the college became a noted centre of musical education, an art gallery containing a good collection of paintings was developed, and last but not least, the championship in many forms of athletics has been in the keeping of the institution for many seasons.

Great men lived there, unconscious of their greatness, achieving far-reaching results in a modest way; many had suffered derision and even imprisonment for their convictions, and, dying, asked no other reward than the approval of their conscience and their God.

That which, more than anything else, lifted the place in my estimation and inspired my love for it and for the country in which such a community was possible, was the fact that here there was no difference of race or of sex; that all were God's children with a full chance to prove their worth.

This was my home for three years; as far as

their value to my life was concerned, they might have been as many decades. While many other forces and other people in other places were at work to remake and shape my mind and character, here I put off much of the "old man" and put on the new. It was a daily conversion, a process which I know is never finished, and in this process, community, college and church each had its share.

It was a busy as well as a self-renewing life; for not only did I study theology, I taught in the modern language department of the college, preached every Sunday and did some manual labour. Such a mixture of occupations not only kept me from becoming one-sided or growing into a pious prig, but helped pay my expenses.

My passion for all sorts and conditions of people was kept alive by the fact that I had to live in close proximity to several Negroes who attended the college and seminary. One of the brightest students in the academy was a black boy who learned German from me so alarmingly fast that I could scarcely keep up with him.

The man who knew Hebrew most thoroughly and had the Hebrew spirit at its best, was a young mulatto with whom I frequently talked about the tragedy of race. I have never been weaned from this sense of kinship with all men, and for

this gift I thank God more than for any other that he has given me.

It would be futile to try to tell of the many jubilant notes which my seminary experiences brought into the hitherto minor chords of my life in America. One epoch-making event, however, I must record. During that period I became an American citizen. On a certain never-to-be-forgotten day I walked to the county seat, about seven miles away, to get my papers. What seemed to me should be a sacred rite proved to be an uninspiring performance. I entered a dingy office where a commonplace man, chewing tobacco, mumbled an oath which I repeated. Then he handed me a document for which I paid two dollars. When I held the long-coveted paper in my hand, the inspiring moment came, but it transpired in my own soul.

"Fellow-citizen with the saints! Fellow-citizen with the saints!" I repeated it many times all to myself.

I scarcely noticed the straight, monotonous seven miles back. I was travelling a much longer road; I was reviewing my whole life. Far away across the ocean I saw the little village in the Carpathian Mountains, with its conglomerate of warring races among which I lived, a despised "Jew boy." Loving them all, I was hated by all.

I heard the flogging of the poor Slovak peasants, the agonized cries of Jewish men and women incarcerated in their homes, while these same peasants, inflamed by alcohol but still more by prejudice, were breaking windows and burning down houses.

I saw myself growing into boyhood more and more separated from my playmates, until I lived, a youth without friends, growing into a "man without a country!"

Again I felt the desolation of that voyage on the sea, relived the sweat shop experience in New York, the hard labour in mill and mine, tramped across the plains and suffered anew all the agonies of the homeless, hungry days in Chicago. Then came the time when faith began to grow and the Christ became real: the reaction from a rigid theology and a distasteful, dogmatic atmosphere. After that, once more a stranger in a strange but holy place, and then a "Fellow-citizen with the saints!" "Fellow-citizen with the saints!"

It is no wonder that strangers like myself love this country, and love it, perhaps, as the native never can. Frequently I have wished for the careless American citizen, who holds his franchise cheap, an experience like my own, that he might know the value of a freeman's birthright. It would be a glorious experience, I am sure, to feel that transition from subject to citizen, from

scarcely being permitted to say, "I," to those great collective words: "We, Fellow-citizens."

If I have preached this doctrine of fellowship in a hundred variations from one end of the country to the other—and I have done it almost with a fanatic's zeal—those who have read the story of my life will understand the reason. I have preached this doctrine with a passion, not only because America gave me the chance to achieve certain things, or because it has granted me certain rights and privileges, but because this country ought to be able to keep itself young and virile and vital enough, to bestow these blessings upon all who crowd our shores, filling our cities and entering daily into our inner life.

A hard and an almost impossible task it is, unless we can bring our idealistic forces to bear upon these unformed and rude elements which come to "spy out the land."

More and more I realize that the right of citizenship has been too easily given, because it is too lightly held; that the time must come when home-born and stranger shall learn to realize that it is not only a gift but a privilege which must be earned, and whose right to hold must be proved by him who holds it. The community, the church, the schools and the other new, articulated ideals which are being born in these better days, must

become so aggressive and so vital, that even these unlettered folk shall know that the three electric signs on Broadway are not the symbols which dominate our life. They must learn that outside this illumined triangle in which the great tragedies of life take place, there is a vast, unlimited field over which broods the spirit of a noble idealism, the spirit of America.

It is a cause for sincere gratitude that we are becoming more and more conscious of the power of ideals in our national life, and that these ideals bid fair to conquer.

Another great day came to me when I graduated from the seminary. I remember everything connected with that momentous exercise. The baccalaureate sermon was preached by the professor of Hebrew, who had in the meanwhile become president of the college. The text was, "For unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to preach the Gospel." It was a call to a humble spirit, a courageous and sincere pride in the vocation upon which we were entering. It fitted into my mood, for I did feel the sense of humility and gratitude. I did appreciate the high privilege which awaited me.

The theme of my address on Commencement Day was: The Old Prophets and the New Problems. I have always been rather prodigal of what

I have written, and that paper long ago disappeared; but its spirit has remained with me. I have never outgrown the theme, even as perhaps I have never attained the ideal I held out.

At last the exercises were concluded and I received my diploma. The tender words spoken as it was given me I also have not forgotten. The mere bowing of the head, that conventional form by which we expressed our thanks, seemed to me most inadequate. Had we been in a different environment, or at least in one where emotions were not held in check, I would have kissed the hand which bestowed it upon me.

Life was all joy that morning. It was a magnificent May day, the eleventh of that superb month. The town was at its best, buried in blossom-crowned trees and carpeted in flowers. It was a glad day and yet a sad one. Three sheltered, glorious years were at an end; years in which everything was given me freely, as God gives freely. I had come a stranger into a strange place, in a strange country. Now I had friends dear and loyal friends. The unsettled, unformed and undirected life was shaped for service.

The class in which I graduated was typical of the product of the institution. It was made up of a mixture of races and nationalities. A number of them went into the foreign field as missionaries,

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and one died a martyr's death in China during the Boxer uprising of 1900; a close, personal friend, whose zeal and courage I always envied, has been one of the moulding forces of the unfortunate Balkan states.

Most of the class have done a valuable, if sometimes humble, service in country and town, carrying wherever they went the idealism they had absorbed.

Some of them have achieved conspicuous success. None of them left Oberlin, the School of the Prophets, with profounder gratitude than I. While I left there with a sense of regret, I went out with joy, for I was leaving it: "No more Stranger, but Fellow-citizen with the Saints."

XXV

MY FIRST PARISH

WHEN Saul went out to seek his father's stray asses and returned an anointed king, he was not more amazed at the mysterious ways of Providence than was I, who went out a homeless, purposeless, Jewish lad, looking for work, and now was comfortably speeded over the same weary road, a Christian minister.

The contrast was all the greater because I went to the same state and the same neighbourhood where once I was a harvest hand; because I crossed, on my way, over the same railroad bridge where I nearly lost my life, and passed by the same farms where I vainly asked for a job; I even saw, or thought I saw, the same barking dogs which blocked my way on the previous journey.

My sense of gratitude to the Divine Providence was intense, not because once I walked half-starved, along those same railroad tracks, while now I rode over them well dressed and well fed; not because I was saved from hard labour and anxiety; rather I felt a great gratitude for all those experiences, for all the stress and strain; for the depths of

despair, the temptations, the narrow margin of escape from death and from that which is worse than death.

Frequently, I think myself back to that day, when, with a bridegroom's joy, I went out to meet my task; when, with a firm grip upon God, I faced the large looming responsibility; when, with a life which seemed fresh and clean as a child's, I approached its solemn beginning. It was a new existence, the past was dead, yet much alive—for we never escape it. It did not seem a stone to weight and hinder, but more like wings, which buoyed me and lifted me. It was not the mere exuberance of youth which I felt; for although not old in years, I had lived much. It was the new life, the ageless life which had come to me with its age-old task; it was the joy of *doing* that bound me to an illumined past and linked me to a glorious future. I have since known many of the exaltations which come into life. The small gratifications of personal vanities, which seem so important at the time they come; the joy of being called by the masters of the feast to come up higher and higher still; but no such experience lifted me to the height which I attained, with the consummation of the first constructive work of my life, as pastor of a little church in Minnesota.

It was a church with a rich history, it might

be better to say, a varied history. It averaged about a pastor a year, and if a grateful people had remembered each one of them with a memorial tablet, the church would scarcely have been large enough to contain them.

Theologically, it stood midway between a conservative Presbyterian and a radical Unitarian church. Methodists and Baptists took care of the emotional element of our bit of Christendom; while an Episcopal church looked after those ritualistically inclined.

There were Adventists, Plymouth Brethren, Spiritualists and Christian Scientists. Enough varieties to satisfy every possible religious taste of the community, which numbered about eight thousand souls, half of whom were Roman Catholics.

The ten other churches I have mentioned ministered to the capricious spiritual wants of the other half, made up of Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Germans and a few Americans.

The religious field to which I had come reminded me of a few acres of ground located outside the town, beside a lake. It was owned by three brothers. They lived together in perfect harmony; but differed widely as to what crops should be raised on their farm. One brother sowed wheat, the other put in corn and the third planted and cultivated potatoes. Of course the crops were all

a failure, but it was a wonderful field to behold, and kept the town amused. I thought it might have served as a parable.

My church was made up of the usual number of good people, who did all the work and bore patiently all the burdens; a few more who sampled the new minister, overwhelmed him with kindness, and then bid fair to make an end of him by their petty criticisms or their neglect.

One of my parishioners who stayed away, after bearing with me for three successive Sundays, refused to come again because she "had her opinion of a minister who parted his hair in the middle." I felt rather guiltless of so frivolous an act, because nature had already begun to do the parting for me, in spite of the fact that I strenuously objected.

Another one of my heroic members, apologizing for her absence from church, said she did not remember whether "it had rained, or was raining, or was going to rain."

The few faithful ones were the salt of the earth, but I often wondered whether the dear Lord did not realize that I liked things well salted.

Fortunately, there were children, to whom I brought an outgoing love. There were the aged, whom I comforted, and the sick, whom I tried to help and heal. I always went to a sick-room in a defiant attitude toward the disease, and with

a buoyant hope in my heart. I held on to "my sick," as I called them, as if they were drowning, and the good Lord and I, together, could pull them from the engulfing deep. When finally, the triumph of death seemed inevitable, I took a sacred joy in guiding the soul fearlessly to the portals of the great beyond.

It was no small gratification to me to find that I was admitted into every sickroom, and did not have to wait to be called, only to assist in planning the funeral service. This familiarity with death did not remove the mystery, but it dispelled the fear, and I am sure that those whom I have helped across the darkness and the deep will be there to guide my feet aright as I pass to the great beyond.

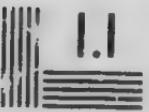
I do not know of any relationship in life so rich and sweet as that of pastor and people, when that relationship is sanctified by a common religious experience. To-day, after many years' removal from that type of labour, I still find in my old parishes my staunchest friends. I miss in my present work the friendship of the children, the touch with old age and its infirmities, the leaning upon me of men who need counsel, the sense of belonging to the entire community and sharing its problems.

I fear I never learned during my pastorates to bear patiently with human pettiness, with those



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trifling criticisms which can hurt so deeply, with the childish vanities of full-grown men and women, and with the ever-dominant self, which should be so subordinated in the most unselfish relationship in life.

I suffered keenly from these things, indeed, they were my only martyrdom; but I could have wished that the suffering had been by virtue of nail prints, rather than of pin pricks. I would have gone joyfully to the cross, but rebelled at being criticised as to how I carried it.

The church necessarily vegetated, it scarcely lived. It might have set itself some heroic task, and in doing it died a glorious death; but I was young and while I had the vision, I lacked the wisdom needed for just that time. My preaching, while dynamic, was scarcely constructive, and I brought into it a somewhat distorted view of values. I preached too often against things, rather than for them. I had the Puritan attitude toward certain amusements and wasted much time and strength, fighting windmills. Unfortunately, neither the church nor I had a program, except perhaps to keep the institution alive, and in that we succeeded; while one of my successors, not many years later, came with a plan and, by following it, killed the church.

In this my first parish I made all the big mis-

takes which ought to be made, if made at all, in a church like that one, where there was little damage to be done. The greatest mistake occurred after a sincere attempt to come into real harmony with all the religious forces of the community. I was upon friendly terms with the Unitarian minister, and found in the bishop of the Roman Catholic Church a more or less cultured man and a most humble minister of Jesus. We exchanged calls with the result that we became friends.

The first rift in this friendship appeared when, upon inviting the Unitarian minister to preach in my church, I received a letter from the bishop chiding me for it, and declaring such an exchange of pulpits disloyalty to our common Master; but that which finally turned our friendship into open enmity came, after he had presided at a meeting, in which a noted convert to the Roman Catholic Church discussed Protestantism with the bias and zeal of the proselyte. I foolishly rushed into print, attacking the enemy with those familiar weapons whose danger lies largely, in that they can be used in both directions: for Protestantism did not always turn the smitten cheek, or indeed was it always guiltless of persecuting, or of any of the sins which belong to an age emerging out of darkness.

A complete estrangement with the good bishop

followed, much to my regret. Only in these later, ripening years, have I learned that truth is many-sided, and that it can be comprehended only in part, no matter how eager we are to know the whole. Our experience and, above all, our personality, determine our relation to truth.

From his Puritan ancestors, the Protestant in America has inherited a strong prejudice against the Roman Catholic Church, which is hard to overcome, and I suffered from that inheritance.

To look with respect upon all manifestations of that historic faith, to treat reverently its doctrines and traditions, and to judge its past in the light of the present, make one no less a Protestant; but give one a chance to be more Christian. To live in harmonious relations with the Roman Catholic Church is a difficult task for the Protestant, especially in the face of its aggression and its dominance in civic affairs; but it does not help the matter to call up doubtful ghosts of the past, to reflect upon its priesthood, or to belittle and ridicule its doctrines.

The competitive struggle among a number of denominations has its good sides, I suppose, but it influenced my thinking and preaching in a wrong way. It cheapened the whole process, and my early enthusiasm for the church suffered great loss. No doubt it is a large enough task for any man to

maintain an institution in which a hundred or two hundred like-minded people gather for worship, twice a week; to fill the pews and at the same time the hearts and minds of men; to close the church year with some gain in membership and no losses to the treasury. The task is indeed a large one, and I may not have been big enough for it.

I had no reason to complain. My church, small as it was, gave me an important place in the life of the community. It gave me a social position of no mean degree, and it projected me into vital contact with men; but it was my first year in the Christian ministry. I owed all I had to my new-won faith. I had an unquenchable ardour, a burning passion, an apostolic zeal; yet I was in danger of becoming hardened by respectability and softened by the solid comforts; a preacher of flowery sermons and not much more. I found no way to pay back to the world what I thought I owed it, and my position made no demand upon me for sacrifice or suffering. No doubt I could have made much more out of the situation than I did make; but that I realized only in the light of my subsequent experience.

There was just one place beside the sickroom which demanded my utmost endeavour; that was the prison, located at the edge of the town, in a dismal setting of scrub oak and granite quarries. Once

a month I went there to preach to the "boys." The superintendent told me that they liked me because I did not preach about the prodigal son. Evidently he was a favourite text with visiting clergymen. I vividly remember one service when the prison choir sang most effectively as an anthem, "I'm the child of a King!" The words seemed in such pitiful contrast with their gray garb, their pale checks, the cells in which they lived and the quarries in which they laboured, that I discarded the sermon I had prepared and took the words of the anthem as my text.

Many years afterwards at the close of a public address, a sturdy, prosperous-looking man pressed forward and, shaking my hand, said: "I sang the solo part in an anthem at a certain place, and you took the words as your text. You preached that sermon to me, and now, thank God, I *am* the child of a King;" and with a grateful pressure of my hand he disappeared in the crowd.

That which makes my first parish most memorable is the fact that to it I brought my bride, to whom I had long been drawn by more than a mere lover's passion. From the beginning until now, marriage has been a spiritual relationship in which sex never cancelled soul. Our life has been so much one that it is difficult to speak of her as apart from myself; although in many of life's tasks she has

had the larger and the harder share. In my parish work she had the constructive mind and that kind of leadership which created the least friction. She has wrought her artistic skill into our home without sacrificing its comforts. Judging and correcting everything I write, she makes the way of my publisher much less hard without endangering my individuality. But lest I say too much on this to me absorbing theme, let me add only that for over twenty years she has been, and still is, my heroine and helper.

In each crisis we have had to meet together, she has supplied the courage for both, whether we faced the problem of the daily bread or of life or death. She never wavered a moment, never turned craven, never feared the depths, nor turned dizzy on the heights.

My people were most generous, both to my bride and to me, and nothing was lacking to make life pleasant. There was work enough to do, yet we both craved a more difficult field; one which would really test our faith and make sure our consecration. Before two years had passed, a call came to a church much less prominent, offering a smaller salary and difficulties which would tax all our resources. When I asked my wife's advice, she said, unhesitatingly, "Of course you will accept it," and I did.

XXVI

THE LOWER TOWN CHURCH

THE Lower Town church, in a large city of the Northwest, was situated between huge railroad yards, terminals of two transcontinental railroads—and the cemetery, a more peaceful terminus. It was not an ideal location for a church. The earth vibrated day and night from the shock of thundering trains, and the air was thick from rising smoke and falling cinders.

My parishioners, all of them wage-earners, worked, almost without exception, either on the railroad or in the cemetery, among "the quick and the dead." Whichever way I looked, I saw either a railroad train or a funeral procession, and neither was an uninspiring sight for a minister of the Gospel.

The church building stood at the edge of a deep ravine, in the bosom of a sandy hill; from below it came the curling smoke, and from above, the sifting sand. Had we been Roman Catholics, we would have needed no incense—had we been Mohammedans we would not have had to seek the desert; but being Protestants who desired to sing hymns

and listen to sermons, we worshiped under difficulties.

The interior of the church was as unprepossessing as the exterior. A much-worn carpet, loosely held together by reluctant patches, covered the floor, and the walls plainly showed the effect of the nearness of the railroad. A small cabinet organ, with the pulpit, which latter stood upon rather insecure foundations, occupied the platform. The pews were augmented by some plain chairs, and the illumination was furnished by smoky coal oil lamps which did not moderate the cold in winter; but greatly increased the heat in summer.

The wealth and the beauty of that church were, nevertheless, unsurpassed. Many of those who sat in the pews came with weary bodies, often walking a mile or two, in spite of the fact that all the week they had laboured for a scant wage. They came for one great, solemn purpose; to hear the Gospel preached. Whole families came, and as children were much in fashion, the pews were full and the atmosphere was charged with vital piety.

It was a cosmopolitan congregation: Scotch, Scotch-Irish and real Irish; Germans, English and French; Swedes and Norwegians, one happy Italian and a few Americans. The children were mixtures of many races, splendid new stock to quicken the life of the nation.

It was an inspiration to hear that congregation sing, defying the clang of bells and the noise of shrill whistles. The wheezy little cabinet organ was played by a delicate, pale-faced woman who transformed it, making up with her soul and heart what the instrument lacked.

I do not know how I preached; blunderingly, no doubt; but with a passion and an eloquence which I have rarely reached since—for here the Word of God was in its native element, among the poor. They were self-respecting, dignified poor, who were rich in faith and in good works. They gave more than the rich, and rejoiced in the giving; although they suffered because of their generosity. They rivalled all other churches of that denomination in the city, in their contributions to good works. I always dreaded to make an appeal; for I knew they would give more than they could afford. They gave not only money, but themselves. The women, weary from their own labour, came to scrub the floors, or patch the hopeless carpet, or wash the clinging soot from windows and walls. They taught in the Sunday school and sang in the choir.

The men were as faithful as the women. They kept the building from caving in or from sliding down the steep hillside; they laboured with me in the church. I wish I could erect a monument to those deacons; real New Testament deacons they

were, the embodiment of loyalty to the beloved community. If I single out one name from the rest, it is because I owe to him who bears it a debt which cannot be cancelled, and I trust that this page may still find him among the living—Deacon Nicoll—a strong, firm, broad-minded Scotchman who saw through my weaknesses the bit of strength, and through my bungling, the good intent; who prayed for me and worked with me, and was helpfully present at every meeting. He never praised me fulsomely—but the pressure of his hand always carried a current of new life and hope into my worn and discouraged frame.

I passed through a rather severe mental crisis during my pastorate in the Lower Town church; but faith never failed me because I knew this man, who was a true disciple whom the higher criticism left unmoved. To him there were no interpolated phrases, and only one authorship, Jesus Christ.

To one who has gone to his reward, I should like to pay my tribute—William F. Myron, who ministered to the Lord in song, whose personal friendship was unwavering, and who took the brunt of the hardest tasks, to save me. His loyal wife, one of that company of women, survives him, and although she has moved to Upper Town, she has remained faithful to the Lower Town church; a bit of heroism rare in these days.

My pastoral work was a shepherd's task, with all the shepherd's joys and sorrows; for even in that flock there were unruly sheep who wandered away and whom I had to seek out and bring back to the fold.

One of my wayward sheep should have been called a ram, at least when he gave way to his enemy, "whusky." In his veins flowed the blood of Scotch Highland chiefs and British pirates. His every nerve was charged with a fierce courage and a thirst for alcohol. When sober, he was as noble as a knight and quite as handsome; when drunk, he slipped back a thousand years, and all his lawless ancestors (and their name was legion) took possession of him. Under the strange spell of intoxication he could repeat the Westminster Catechism, the metric version of the Psalms, and the poems of "Bobby" Burns—backward and forward, never missing a word. Right eloquent was he, but woe unto him who crossed his path and attempted to cross him. He was a periodical drunkard, and when the passion overcame him, he made up in a week what he had missed through sober months. During one of these sprees, he lost his job, and his wife and children were in want. I, as a good shepherd, went after my wandering sheep. I found him in a melancholy mood. He looked upon me as Saul might have looked upon

David, with a sort of contemptuous pity. My gentle admonitions he met with apt quotations from the Scriptures such as "And wine maketh glad the heart of man!" When I began to upbraid him, he rose in all his offended dignity.

"Wha bade ye come to me hoose?"

When I told him that it was my duty to come; "Na, na, it's nae yer duty to come into me hoose," and with that he took me, not gently, by the back of my neck, carried me out and set me upon the sidewalk, with these words: "Dominie, ye need nae come to me hoose mair, till I send for ye."

He did send for me, and I went again and again, with prayer and admonition; but his ancestors were too much for him; he went out in one of those storm-tossed days of his and never returned alive.

I tried to save much human wreckage, succeeding in some cases and failing in others. I drew an ill-mated couple into the fold, but they would not remain enfolded. Both were intemperate, he with liquor, she with novels. He was born on the coast of Maine, followed the sea, then drifted inland and tried to settle down at a cobbler's bench in Lower Town. Many an hour I sat on a three-legged stool opposite him, watching him straighten out crooked heels and patch worn-out soles. The straightening of a pair of crooked heels is, after

all, an easy job, even if each be worn in another direction; but to straighten out a pair of ill-shaped and ill-mated human beings—"Aye, there's the rub!" Time after time I found him standing by the kitchen stove, drinking beer from a tin pail and eating a smoked herring out of soiled fingers while his wife sat in her untidy parlour in the one rocking chair of which it boasted, reading the "Memoirs of Madame Pompadour," or other spicy stuff. All their trivial quarrels were brought to me. He showed me his unmended garments as proof of her negligence, and she displayed the black and blue spots with which her spouse had decorated her.

What made the situation more tragic was that they were both deeply religious, and their seasons of repentance came at the most unexpected and inconvenient times. At two o'clock in the morning he would waken me from my slumbers to pray for him; his soul sober, but his body still staggering.

She usually came on Saturday, when I was busy with my sermons. At such times she would pour out her soul before me, confessing her sins and promising to "tidy up," cook a decent meal and be done with novels. These seasons of repentance, with much effort on my part, sometimes lasted a week or two, then they both slipped back; he to

beer and herring, she to her rocking chair and the novels.

I thought it a day of great triumph when, in one of those repentant moods, they united with the church. She, gaunt and ungainly, towered above him, undersized and cadaverous, his eyes burning from the supreme desire for drink. When, confessing their sins, they professed repentance and accepted the guidance of the Christ, I thought I heard the angels in heaven rejoice. Both the man and his wife leaned upon me more than upon their Lord; so before many months I found him reeling and his wife rocking as before. Finally, the last enemy came to claim him. He went once more upon the sea. During a storm he tried to take in the torn, flapping sails and fell into the hungry waves.

After his death his wife left the city and it was years before I heard of her again. She had cast in her lot with a certain religious group and was leading a respectable and useful life.

Fortunately, the majority of the people and the homes of the Lower Town church were not of the stamp just described, and I came in contact with many interesting, if humble, people, of varied creeds and races.

Lower Town had no parks, no sparkling fountains, no shade trees, no green lawns; but it had

children—children innumerable; French toddlers whose eyes were bigger than all the rest of them; olive-complexioned, dirty, junior banana peddlers; tow-headed little Swedes, and Pats and Mikes innumerable.

It has often been a question why there were so many of them in Lower Town, but I think now that they were all made for "Mike Flaherty's Candy Store"!

So read his gorgeously painted sign, and the children swarmed around the store like bees around clover.

"Och! Oi loves the childers," Mike used to say. "Me and me Mary ain't had nin of our own"—and here he heaved a deep sigh.

"Forty years hev we been merried, come next St. Patrick's Day, and niver a chick nor child of our own. God bless 'em all, the little darlints; Oi love thim all ixcept thim durty little Dagoes, drat 'em! Oi can't shtand thim; they smell, sur!" Here his grimy fist would come down upon the counter with such force that the candy jars rattled in sympathy. "You don't belave me; Oi say it again, they smell, sur, they do; Oi smell the varmints a square away, sur!"

For all that, Mike had no compunction in taking their pennies as they came to him from many a dirty palm in exchange for his chewing gum, his

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fly-specked marbles and sticks of many-hued candy.

Mike and Mary had kept the Lower Town candy store for many years. At four o'clock in the morning the door would swing open and the curtain would be raised, disclosing to view the same boxes of chewing gum, a tray full of jewelry premiums for the gum purchasers, marbles and tops. Until twelve o'clock at night the dim light burned in a transparency, assuring the passer-by of "Ice cream for sale by the quart or dish inside."

Mary was the presiding genius during the early morning hours, and Mike held vigil while burned the "midnight oil." As he felicitously expressed it, "Mary catches the urly burds and Oi catches the late ones."

Mike was small and wiry, only a slight tilt of the nose betraying his nationality. He wore his hair long and brushed it tightly over the bald spot in front.

A large cross hung from his huge watch chain. "You moightn't think them is rale diamonds, sur," he would say to every new acquaintance, "very few thinks it, but they're ginuwine."

No, they never would think it; for there was no more light or sparkle in those stones than there was in poor Mary's pale blue eyes.

Mary must once have been a beautiful girl.

Her complexion still showed some of the blush of youth, lingering, as the sunset glow lingers in the sky. Her hair, almost white, was still abundant.

For some time I had noticed in my not infrequent visits to the dear old couple that Mary seemed frailer than usual; so it was no shock to me when Mike came breathlessly into my study one day, crying:

"Mary is awful sick, sur! Oi'm going for the docther. Won't you come over and watch by her while Oi fetches him?"

I found Mary, almost unconscious, lying upon the couch. When she saw me, she lifted her feeble fingers to her forehead, making the sign of the cross. I understood. She wanted a priest; but not daring to leave her alone, I took the crucifix from the wall and gave it to her. She pressed it to her lips while I knelt and prayed as best I could. I never felt that I knew how to pray for the dying; but I did pray until Mike came with the doctor. Then I went for the priest.

He performed the sacred rite of the Extreme Unction and prayed in a different tongue, and a different way from mine; but I am sure that our petitions did not clash, as they rose to the throne of God.

Another home where I loved to go was a bright spot, where one good housewife had successfully

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battled with soot, and smoke, and dust, and grime. This bright spot was old Mrs. Kaiser's cottage.

A freshly painted iron fence replaced the wooden one which had been whittled away by the army of Lower Town loafers, or carried away little by little for kindling wood by her economically inclined Irish neighbors.

Old-fashioned hollyhocks grew inside the railing, peonies, sweet william and geraniums guarded the porch, and climbing over it was a Virginia creeper, its bright green, with shining leaf, assuring the passer-by that both porch and vine were scrubbed every summer's day. The flowers were brighter than any in Lower Town, and every Sunday a bouquet tightly tied into a towering pyramid stood on the pulpit of the Lower Town church.

But brighter than her flowers and vine was dear old Mrs. Kaiser herself. She was much bent by age, there was hardly a tooth in her mouth, but there shone in her eyes the light of goodness which burns brighter as the body fails. A sweet, sad smile always played about her lips, and when she stood among her hollyhocks and peonies, or sitting on the porch, rocked and rocked, as she peeped through the vines, there was sunshine in Lower Town.

One stormy winter's night I was hastily called

to this bright spot to administer the communion. Dear old Mrs. Kaiser was dying. A spiritual radiance which emanated from her face seemed to fill the room. Her mind, weakened by illness, wandered and I was her son, the one who had gone from her years before and never returned. She looked strangely like my own dear mother, and I did love her as a son.

She believed in the transubstantiation of the bread and wine. To her they were the real body and blood of the slain Son of God. As I held the sacramental cup to her lips, I cared not to disturb her unwavering faith, and I am sometimes tempted to believe that even so great a miracle was possible, in an atmosphere like that, in which antagonistic faiths blended, and strangers became mother and son.

The next spring the beautiful flowers in front of Mrs. Kaiser's cottage were sadly neglected, and another bright spot in Lower Town had grown dim; for the sand and soot had claimed it as their own.

The great and permanent result of my Lower Town ministry was the new note which came into my preaching. It used to be, "People, be good!" In a hundred ways, from a hundred texts I had preached it. Now it became: "People, be good *to One Another*," and no matter what my text or my

subject, whether I preach or teach or write—in one way or another it comes. "*People, be good to One Another.*"

In Lower Town I saw the supreme test of the Church accomplished. A vital unity was created among people of different races . . . tongues; they were bound together into a new blood kinship, which is wider than tribe or nation or race, and they were a new people, one in Christ Jesus.

There, for the first time, I came in touch with the "Melting Pot." It was not a chafing-dish, with an alcohol lamp under it, as many, forming their conception of it from Mr. Zangwill's rather mild drama, imagine it to be; it was a real, seething caldron, with its age-old fires of hate and prejudice threatening to consume its contents. Then came the torrent of love, with its mighty power, putting out the old fire by kindling a new one.

There in Lower Town my neighbour, an old Jewish ragman, came and asked me to "commit a matrimony," by marrying his niece to as typical an Irishman as I have ever seen. There, too, I baptized the baby born of that Irish-Jewish parentage.

The relatives on both sides claimed the privilege of selecting its name, and decided on Patrick and Moses, respectively. A conflict seeming imminent, as I stood ready to perform the sacred rite—I

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interposed and with one syllable from each name, baptized the child *Patmos*, which satisfied both factions.

This boy Patmos became rather symbolic of all my ministry, for it has been my supreme effort to reconcile old divisions, blot out old hates and bring into kinship those who have been afar off. It would be too great presumption to believe that I have always succeeded; but to feel that I have tried, that I am still trying and have not lost faith that it shall ultimately be accomplished, is something in which to glory.

XXVII

THE LOWER TOWN PARSONAGE

THE parsonage, fortunately, had nothing which the church or its people lacked. It fitted well into its environment of soot, sand and poverty. It was not a bit pharisaical. "The outside of the cup and platter" was no more inviting than the inside, when we first saw it, one cold, gray November day. Its original colour was undiscoverable.

Within, some of the rooms showed graceful festoons of paper hanging from the walls; while in others, sections of plaster had fallen from the ceilings. Gas and electricity were as far removed from us as from the Middle Ages, window panes were missing, and even the frames were gone from the cellar windows, thus offering free access to the neighbourhood's numerous cats. They were not a serious menace; but when the mercury suddenly dropped and the frost gripped the water pipes and the snow drifted into the cellar, we realized that we had a battle to fight, which proved to be no easy one.

We spent much of our time thawing out the lead

pipes with kerosene flames, and that a conflagration did not result, must be due to the fact that a special Providence watches over foolish young preachers and their wives. There was a furnace in the house—but it was in a state of *innocuous desuetude*—so we kept from freezing by installing one of those artistic structures known as base-burners. Fortunately, there were many rooms in the house, and by closing the worst of them and furnishing the best, the outlook became more encouraging.

There was also a severe struggle in making the inadequate salary meet the household budget and other financial obligations. Mere delicacies were ruled out of our *menu*, and the varying fashions in clothes had to be followed "afar off"—very far indeed; yet all the comfort and luxury which could be created by a most skilful helpmeet, all the happiness which comes from love, all the satisfaction which follows service, were there, in abundant measure.

Some of our trustees, with their own hands, made the most necessary repairs, and under the stress of circumstances, we became paperhanglers, upholsterers and painters. In that parsonage we began the making of our present type of home, which has upon everything the personal touch and whose value cannot be estimated in money.



A CORNER IN OUR LIBRARY



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The settlement in this country was yet in its infancy; but quite unconsciously we created one. The parsonage became the community centre and was used for the common good. We had no printing press, but we spent many weary hours designing and manifolding on the mimeograph a weekly leaflet which gave the parish news and served as a medium of expression for the various organizations of the church.

There were boys' and girls' clubs which we planned and drilled for all sorts of entertainments; classes, studying a variety of subjects, met in the evenings with one or the other of us, and our activities, while absorbing and often fatiguing, brought their own reward. There, too, a group of workingmen met with me to discuss their problems, which were beginning to be acute, and finally culminated in a serious, long-drawn-out strike.

The men were in no sense agitators or inclined to demand unreasonable concessions. Their grievance lay at the root of modern industrialism; they experienced the change from personal relationship to a "boss," who once was of their own class, to a Limited Liability Stock Company, with its divided ownership and its absentee landlordism. They used to work with "Jim" and they worked for him with a kind of fierce joy. "Jim" was shrewd enough to see that another transcontinental

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line was needed to the Pacific Northwest, and he began to build it; that is, he had the vision and determination, and these men helped him realize them, and rejoiced in every new mile of railroad added to the system. They worked time and overtime for "our road"; invented new mechanical devices and asked no reward, except that of seeing their road grow beyond the older rival.

They were not a bit envious of "Jim," who had taken a wife of their own class, moved up on "The Hill" and built himself a home bigger than the roundhouse at the terminus and costlier than a king's palace. They were proud of it all, and gloried in it, in spite of the fact that they had to stay in Lower Town and live among the sandhills and the smoke-filled ravines. The bosses and foremen were of their own kind, and they all worked together for the good of the road.

Then came the change, gradually, but not painlessly. The old men were dropped without ceremony. Their pay envelopes were handed them, with the last week's wages inside, and "You need not report next week," outside. I remember one old man who had worked in the car department many years; a self-respecting, God-fearing Englishman, who had brought up and educated a large family. He had given his best years and much of his inventive genius to "our railroad," for a com-

pension which gave him no chance to save. When he was unceremoniously discharged, the shock so dazed him that, like a heartbroken man, he lay down and died.

Then came a sharp reduction of wages. Ordinarily the men would have faced courageously the problem of how to live on a smaller wage; but now they were sullen and resentful. If "Jim" had gone down to the shops and explained to them that times were hard and cars idle, and that dividends had to be paid; or if he had come and told them that he, too, had his salary reduced on account of the hard times, they would have gone to work and laboured harder than ever.

Or if "Jim" could have known what that cut in wages meant to Lower Town. Of course he knew once, because he lived there and was one of them; but he had forgotten that at such times debts piled up at the grocer's, that the men in despair hung around the saloon and stupefied their minds with fiery whiskey; that children were sick and needed nursing and medicine. Perhaps if "Jim" had remembered, the wages would not have been cut quite so deeply.

So the workingmen struck. They hung about in sullen groups, they yelled "scab," threw rocks, blocked switches and demolished trains. There were deputy sheriffs and constables and hired ruf-

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fians by the hundreds; but they did not compel the men to go back to work. It was the hunger of their children that did. They were defeated, and returned to their places at a lower wage; but I venture to say that, because of the lower wage, there was much the lower output. The one thing of supreme value which they never could give again was the self-sacrificing devotion they once felt to "our road."

It is frequently claimed that Socialism has created class consciousness. No doubt it intensifies it, by bringing it out into strong relief; but I have seen class consciousness grow before my very eyes, and Socialism had nothing to do with it. I do know that two-thirds of the men whom I used to meet in that upper room became Socialists. I have no means of knowing how many of them have despaired even of Socialism with its orderly program, and have swung over to the I. W. W., but their number cannot be inconsiderable.

I have been told frequently that we import Socialists and Anarchists. Probably we get those who have awakened in the Old World to the Old World's wrongs, and have despaired of seeing them righted. Perhaps a few of them are imported; but we have quite a respectable home industry, what one might call an infant industry, in the manufacture of Anarchists. This one, like many infant

industries, has grown colossal, having fed upon the results of special privileges to the few, and special wrongs to the many.

It is undeniable that gigantic corporations have helped to create gigantic problems; that although they have spanned continents more quickly, they have separated humanity too suddenly. They may have heaped products; but they have also cheapened the producers.

I repeatedly went to see "Jim," to plead with him for his men. I never succeeded in penetrating further than the outer office, and was well laughed at for my pains, when I told his underling my remedy for the strike. I have sometimes laughed at myself when I thought of the remedy, which I have so often urged for our social ills. I had almost lost faith in it, until the other day.

In the vestibule of a church, where I had spoken, the president of a steel company caught hold of me. When he introduced himself I felt myself growing pale; for I knew his name as one to be conjured with, a master of thousands of men, and I expected him to scoff at me. He took my arm and gripped it, while he told me a story, the end of which I did not care to hear; for I felt sure it would smash my theories.

"We had a strike, one strike only," he said. "Our men grew excited through agitators who

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had come among them. They destroyed much property, and our mills were as idle as a merry-go-round in the winter time.

" I asked to see the leaders, and they came. They were Hungarians and Poles, stolid fellows who had worked for us a number of years. They stated their grievances; I realized that they were just, and granted their demands immediately. All were to be taken back except the strike leaders. To this the men agreed; because these men had been particularly and needlessly vicious.

" As they went out with their heads hanging, ashamed or resentful, I called them back and, speaking to the one who seemed to be the leader, and the worst man in the bunch, I said: ' How long have you worked for us? '

" ' Nine years.'

" ' Do you want to keep on working for us? '

" The man caught my hand and said, ' Me no good English, me no good man; me gotta wife and hungry children; wanna work for boss, and God strike me dead if me strike against boss! '

" They all went back to work, and now if they have a grievance, they come to the boss, *who believes in the remedy*."

Yes, I should have lost faith in the remedy long ago, had it not been that I have never seen it fail where once it has been tried. I know there are

difficulties in the way. I have an inkling of the value of bonds and stocks and dividends. I know something of the sullenness of masses and the ferocity of radical leaders; but I also know something of the value of men and the quality of the heart and mind of the workers.

If we have civil war in our midst, and horrors which rival the Commune; if we have a tenseness of feeling and a bitterness of spirit which cry for vengeance; if the state falls back upon guns, and industry upon gunmen; if law and order are swallowed by the chaos of bloodshed and lawlessness, it is because the men who have power in the shape of capital have had no faith in that power whose symbol is the cross.

I have almost envied the men who lead the masses and preach a fierce revolution; who cry out the day of vengeance, the awful day of the Lord. I know I might have stood exactly where they are, if not behind prison bars, or in the shadow of the gibbet, had I not come under the spell of the Christ.

Yet I do not wish to be lamed by him, or tamed; I do not wish to truckle to the masters, I never shall. I do believe that the Christ's love is more powerful than hate. I believe in the pierced hand, the wounded side and the sacrificial blood; but if I am sheltered in a false security, if it is all merely

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to save me and mine—above all, if it separates me from those who cry out against their taskmasters, then I want to take my stand with them and be doomed in their doom, if thus it must be.

We all suffered from the strike in Lower Town, the butcher, the baker and the sermon maker—it was right we should. We, in the parsonage, suffered the least; for we had hosts of friends. Our physician, Dr. L. M. Benepe, although belonging to another denomination, never would accept any remuneration for his many services to us. He and his wife, a woman of rare strength and beauty of character, have remained our valued friends through all the years. Another friend was Hastings H. Hart, then a resident of that city. God did his best in making him. We always suspected him of sending the big box of good things which came anonymously one day, when times were hardest. Our hearts go out in gratitude to Rev. R. P. Herrick and his noble wife. Their hospitable home was always open to us. And yet, in spite of strikes and hard times and harder work, we spent four very happy years in the Lower Town parsonage; not the least cause of our happiness being, that there, one bright October Sunday morning, our first baby and only daughter came to us, just as the church bells rang for service.

It was not a call to a larger work which took

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us from the Lower Town church. I was not even sure that the Lord was in any way concerned with our going. It was a perfectly mundane and materialistic pressure, which influenced us in considering the call extended me by a church in Ohio.

One evening I brought my deacons together. I wish I could have preserved the atmosphere of that meeting. We prayed together, really honest prayers. I did want to stay, and I think they wanted me to; but when I presented to them my problems, they realized that staying was impossible. When I think myself back into that company of saints, I know I never knelt among better men; never since has prayer been so real and the Divine Presence so manifest. Looking back over my life, I sometimes think I should have stayed in the Lower Town church, even if staying did seem hopeless; for it was the biggest job I ever had, and the one in which I was always sure that I earned my salary.

A short time ago I spoke at one of the Ford Hall meetings in Boston. The room was crowded, as it always is, by an eager mass of humanity. As I sat on the platform watching those thousands, so animated by one high purpose that they looked like one individual, two notes were handed me. Both were from members of the Lower Town church during my pastorate, and both asked to see me at the close of the service.

I was to speak on a variation of my theme of Brotherhood. During the address, I felt my two friends in the audience; for they were the witnesses. I knew I must not preach anything I had not tried to practise, for they had known me during that period of my life when I began trying to be a brother to all men. Much that I said then, upon that great theme, and much that I have said since, I learned in the Lower Town church where there was a true brotherhood. Although we were racially and culturally far apart, we were one in Christ Jesus, in whom we had the same culture, the culture of the cross, and the same inheritance, the hope of heaven.

There were many kind things said to me at the close of that wearing address in Ford Hall, many things which I think were meant; but when she who had been Susan Crotty came, and reminded me of the fact that she was once in my Sunday school, that I married her to John Anderson, that I was as good as my word and had been a brother to them in those Lower Town days, I was most humbly grateful. She had scarcely left me, her dark eyes full of tears, when a tall, red-haired young man appeared, saying, as he wrung my hand: " You preached a sermon just like that in the Lower Town church. It was a frightfully stormy Sunday, a regular blizzard; there were just three people in

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your congregation: Deacon Nicoll, his boy George and myself." I wanted to know who "myself" was. "Oh," he replied, "I was that red-haired, speckled Irish kid, that clung to you like a burr. Say, you were a brother to me, all right enough!"

Then before I could ask more about him, he was pushed aside by the passing throng.

After all, it may have been more worth while to preach to three people in the Lower Town church than to three thousand in Ford Hall—who knows?

XXVIII

THE CHURCH OF THE THREE PROBLEMS

IN my new parish, I was faced by three problems, each one of them big enough to make my task formidable. They were: the Race Problem, the Higher Criticism and the Social Emphasis of the Gospel.

It seemed to me that almost all the people I met on the street were coloured, and looking from my study into the alley, I saw them sunning themselves on the sloping roofs of their shanties or lolling about in most leisurely fashion, wherever they found a prop against which to lean. The old mammies with their woolly heads tied in gorgeous bandannas, were there, doing the "white folks'" washings; while numerous little pickanninies, all unconscious of the fact that they were born into an unwelcoming world, played in the gutters. It was a glimpse into a bit of American Africa, which housed nearly a third of the city's population; but it looked twice as large as it was, because the unlike always look numerous and race problems are intensified by that fact.

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"Shanty Town," where the coloured population lived, was squeezed into the alleys where the white citizens swept their refuse, thus maintaining for themselves a respectable front. It was picturesque enough, and had I been an artist, I should have delighted in its be-turbaned washerwomen, its sturdy loafers and its cunning pickaninnies. Being a pastor, I saw the unpicturesque dirt, the houses of prostitution, the gambling dens and the vicious dance halls which were pushed into those alleys; so that we superior white people might have a chance to thank God for our clean city, and that we were not as this inferior race.

It was my first contact with the Negro as the white man's neighbour. That he was a back-door neighbour, of course made a great difference; but gave me a chance to observe him at close range and study his artless, childlike, stupidly happy ways. Of course many people kept Negro servants. We had one of them in our household. Dear old "Aunt Sarah"! A relic of slavery days, the incarnation of faithfulness, she will be one of the white souls I shall find in heaven. She had been a wife, but knew nothing of her husband; a mother, and her children were taken from her. She was all alone in her old age, unresentful, patient and sweet; blessing those who had despitefully used her. If she was at all typical of Negro women, or if

there are or were numbers of such women among them, then the Lord have mercy upon us for having done no better by these people than we did.

I knew of them, at first, as loafers, thieves and prostitutes, a horrible outer fringe of the city's life; but I also learned to know them and respect them in their homes, their churches and their lodges. Out of that neighbourliness grew such a sense of responsibility that I regarded them as belonging to my parish, and it is needless to say that they were not the only black sheep of my flock.

My own history, with its struggle against the limitations of race, fitted me in no small degree for this interesting and rewarding task. The richest bit of wisdom I ever heard upon that point came from the lips of a coloured man, who said to me, "Parson, the only way to get fellowship is to be the fellow in the same ship, and I reckon that's what you are." I am very fond of quoting this *bon mot*.

I never commiserated the Negroes. On the contrary, I tried to make them joy in being black. They honoured me each year by asking me to be their orator at the celebration of Emancipation Day, and it was not difficult for me to strike the right note and make the proper appeal. Many a time did I shame some of my auditors and win an

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approving laugh by chiding them for imitating the poor ways of us poor whites.

I have no means of knowing how many of those of us who called ourselves Christians felt any responsibility for these black, back-door neighbours—very few, I fear. I do know fairly well that there were many white people, the husbands and sons of my front-door neighbours, who went in and out among them, carrying corruption.

I know that at election time the coloured man was flattered and bribed, to help maintain dishonest courts, venal judges and a purchasable police. I also know that the entire community reaped a harvest of riots, lynchings, destruction of property and disruption of peaceful relations.

One night a black scoundrel resisted arrest by a white officer and killed him. The result was a bloody race war, which still sends a thrill of horror through those who remember it. Had I been there when it happened, I fear I should have been in the thick of it and have pleaded the cause of the black man. If the mob had listened to me, I would have pointed out the real criminals among them, the guilty white men who deserved the terrible end of their victim. Doubtless it would have been useless; but I frequently think that I should have liked the opportunity to prove my faith in the human,

by some such daring deed, and then take the consequences.

If the animosity between the races had not been so great, or if men's minds had not been so clouded by prejudice, that rational thinking for most of them seemed impossible, the community would have appointed a day of fasting and prayer; for at the bottom of the black man's wickedness lay the white man's vices of lust and greed.

One of the city's judges who came in direct contact with the small misdemeanours of the blacks, was a man who led a brazenly immoral life; yet he was elected again and again to that responsible office by his irresponsible, white constituents. The trail of corruption led to the higher courts, and then into so many channels that, tracing them, one grew bewildered and discouraged.

My own people were patient with me, and loyal to me, in spite of the fact that in my zeal I took many a misstep which deserved their censure. Quite naturally they did not all rejoice over the few black men and women who came on Sundays to hear me preach, and the pew in which they sat was as safe from invasion as if it had been quarantined for smallpox. I understood their feeling and sympathized with them; for I appreciate the fact that race aversion, whatever its basis, is real to others, however little of it I may feel.

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Not only did Negroes come to my church services—Jews also came. The members of one family quite filled a pew, regularly, every Sunday. There was nothing offensive about them. They were not strikingly different from the rest of the congregation in features, dress or behaviour; indeed, they were a superior group. If a great modern artist had seen them, he might have used them as models to group around the Christ Child. Even as it was, it would have been no sacrilege to have called them a Holy Family.

The father had a peculiarly gentle, Jewish face unmarred by shrewdness; the mother's face was placid and sweet; while the children were promising Americans, who, to-day, occupy leading positions in the life of that community.

They came to church because my gospel appealed to them. They were hungry, as I had been, for human fellowship, sanctified by religion. Yet their presence provoked criticism, and they remained as isolated as the Negroes; until finally they ceased to come.

The other two problems in this church did not seriously vex my soul: although it was a trying ordeal through which I passed, in common with other ministers, who had to face the results of the higher criticism and the social interpretation of the Gospel.

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What greatly helped me in my ministry was my religious passion, fed by my own experiences; so that the question of the authorship or historicity of any portion of the Bible did not affect my preaching. While I could not, and did not, care to escape the proven results of the scientific study of the Scriptures, my faith rested on no external authority, and that enabled me unwaveringly to preach a Gospel which is ageless and changeless. I also have a high degree of reverence for old people. I realize how tenaciously they cling to that which has been the truth to them, all their lives, and I was never tempted to ruthlessly assail their faith. Indeed, it never seemed to me that a composite Pentateuch or the two Isaiahs had any bearing upon the truth I tried to convey.

The social emphasis, while never lacking in my preaching, was never one-sided. I saw then and still see, the need of the regeneration of the individual. I never believed that clean sewers meant, necessarily, clean hearts, that better wages would always give us better men; but I did believe in harmonizing the two, and faithfully I preached the whole Gospel to the whole man and to the whole community.

Here, as in my previous churches, and in spite of an earnest desire to do right, I made grievous mistakes. I fear that too often my sermons were pre-

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pared primarily to draw crowds, and were sometimes in danger of becoming tainted by an unwholesome sensationalism. Some of them were diffuse, and I trust I shall not be called in judgment for every idle word I have spoken. One virtue I dare claim for my preaching, its fearlessness; but even that not infrequently would have had better results, had I displayed less zeal and more wisdom.

I regret that I often permitted myself to be drawn into uttering protests against the conventional shortcomings of society, and that I did not more searchingly probe its real sores.

The churches of that city were divided, not so much by religious convictions as by social distinctions; the ministers, a royal group of men, met each Monday, but we spent too much of our time bemoaning the surface ills of our flocks and of the town. Out of those ministers' meetings came great good fellowship, but not much else.

It was during this pastorate that there came to me a realization of the limitations which hamper the work of the Church, and I chafed under it.

I think I know almost the exact moment when my first great passion seemed spent, when I ceased to be, with all my heart and soul, the minister of my own church, and became something more; yet something less. I began to write, and rejoiced to find another channel of expression.

I went to Europe in my modest, steerage way, and spent glorious mountain-top days with the great spirits then dominating the literary horizon of the Old World.

I had a wonderful day with Maurice Jokai, the Hungarian novelist, then past his period of greatest productiveness; a fiery, romantic genius, the Walter Scott of his country.

With Maurice Maeterlinck I travelled to Antwerp and Ghent, and later spent a few hours on the roof-garden of his home in Paris, watching with him the bees, whose biography he was then writing in his matchless, mystic way.

I sought out Gerhart Hauptmann, and translated into English his "Hannele's Dream," that exquisite story in which flesh and spirit are woven around the Christ.

I visited Hermann Sudermann and, seated in his box in the Deutsche Theater in Berlin, heard one of his plays rendered. It was a distinctly artistic and religious experience, for it was his John the Baptist, that mighty bit of realism portraying the New Testament hero.

In friendliest intercourse I met that ironine iconoclast, Max Nordau, and watched the awakening of Jewish nationalism from the splendid vantage ground of personal and intimate acquaintance

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with Theodore Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism.

Two trips through the length and breadth of the Slavic world, revived my early love of the language and literature of those great people, the Slavs.

Best of all, I paid an annual visit to Tolstoy, rekindling at the flame of his life my passion for the Kingdom of God.

Returning from these trips, I incorporated my observations and experiences into my preaching, enriching it and weakening it at the same time.

Besides the social intercourse with my own people, I was so fortunate as to be drawn into a group of like-minded men of high ideals, and the bond of friendship then created has never been broken.

I had gained the esteem and interest of the community and regained a world-wide outlook; but I had lost my church, or rather, the church had lost me.

Looking back and trying honestly to interpret that period, I feel that I would have remained an ardent, if not a great preacher, and could have created a broad and useful church by drawing to it the halt, the maimed and the blind, men of all colours and creeds; but the church was not ready for so heterogeneous a membership. For which I cannot blame that particular church. On the

whole, it was, if anything, more Christian than the other churches in that place, and less given over to worldly pride; yet it was only a Congregational church into which a few people of a certain type fitted, socially and ecclesiastically.

I blame myself and not my church. I should have made as unsatisfactory a rabbi as I was a Protestant pastor; for in my case the two positions would have been almost identical. The activity of the one would have been bounded by race only; the activity of the other was limited by race and by the bank accounts of my flock and their resultant social standing.

One Sunday in the early fall, a group of strangers faithfully attended all the church services. They were members of a church committee looking for a pastor. After the evening service they offered me a parish in which more fish were caught, more beer brewed, more wine fermented and more souls lost annually, than in any other town in the state. Within two weeks I had accepted what proved to be my last pastorate.

XXIX

THE MAGIC WATCH

I HAD spent four years in my last pastorate and had preached my final if not my farewell sermon. I have never been guilty of making the close of a pastorate the occasion for a last scolding, or a recapitulation of my achievements; neither have I knowingly caused the tender-hearted to weep. On that particular Sunday I brought a simple message, whose text and subject I do not remember.

Yet I could not wholly conceal the sadness I felt. It was an effort to speak, and although there was a smile in my eyes, it only veiled the tears.

There was the usual Sunday evening congregation; if anything somewhat smaller, for it was a stormy night, and the curicus did not know that my work there was at an end. I had purposely withheld this information from the newspapers, because I felt that the day would be difficult enough, without any formal leave-takings.

In the front pew sat a fisherman and his family; with him I had faced the storms of the lake and the fiercer storms of his matrimonial sea.

Gentle as a lamb when sober, he was a fiend when drunk, and for weeks after his periodic spree, I had to be at his home every day with prayer and entreaty, to keep the family from disruption. Twice the lawyers were about to file the papers for a divorce case, and each time I linked husband and wife together. With every recurring rupture, however, I felt a little less sure that I was doing right in saving the wreck.

Many lonely women were there, worse than widowed, who knew all too well the tragedy of married life, as staged by King Alcohol.

In the congregation I saw mothers, whose children had suffered for want of food, clothing and even medicine, because the fathers suffered from the town's chief industry—that of making drunkards out of men.

It had a good many more than a hundred saloons to its population of twenty thousand and they all worked overtime at the job.

Children were always in my church in large numbers, and they were all loyal to me—what is still better, they were loyal to the end.

Near the pulpit sat an old man, gentle and sweet; but as he dealt in the most malodorous hides, the scent of which permeated his clothing, he usually occupied his pew alone. What made him particularly offensive to the sensitive nostrils of the church

was, that he stood by the door at every meeting, extending in welcome a most unwelcome hand to the worshippers.

A few of those I looked down upon from the pulpit that night knew it was the end and were sincerely sorry that it was so. With peculiar pleasure I recall a certain man, zealous in his religion, even to the hurt of his business, a severe test of one's sincerity. His was one of the few families in that place in which sons were brought to maturity without shipwreck to their characters. There were a few other helpful ones, whose faithful support never flagged and whose friendship we still cherish, and many highly respectable people who had been neither hot nor cold, whose attitude had often made me feel like echoing the apostolic sentiment, in describing similar Christians.

There were three Negroes in that church as white beneath their skin as any one I ever met. Two of them were the conscientious sexton and his efficient wife; the third was a business man whom I knew, not only as a parishioner, but as a true friend, in whose company I delighted.

The rest of that Sunday night congregation was a miscellaneous group which came, perhaps, because there was nothing better to do.

Usually I waited to shake hands with the members of my congregation, although often I should

have preferred to run away and be alone with the reaction which always comes to me after an honest attempt to preach the Gospel. That night as soon as I pronounced the benediction I left the pulpit through the choir entrance and groped my way into the dark basement. I could hear footsteps following me and made an ineffective attempt to escape; but when I could go no farther, I turned and saw a woman, one of my most faithful members, weeping and holding toward me a silver-handled umbrella which she pressed upon me as a farewell gift. Vainly she tried to express herself—emotion overcame her and she left me, with my eyes full of tears and the umbrella in my hand.

It was a wonderfully symbolic gift, that umbrella, for it was a stormy pastorate from its beginning to the end; yet stormy as it was, those four years were the best I had ever spent. I gave unreservedly all I had to give, in an honest attempt to do the work of a Christian minister, as I felt it should be done. I think I gave the best I had, or ever shall have to give.

Not only was it a stormy pastorate from its beginning; it was a doomed pastorate. I succeeded a remarkably popular man of the evangelistic type, who had built a new church and drawn to it the greater part of its members. They kept his memory green through personal loyalty, which was

fostered by his frequent visits and still more frequent letters, written to various friends in the church. At that time I was guilty of a grave error which I never committed before or since. I tried to follow the methods of my predecessor and failed, of course; displeasing those who wished me to be different and not gaining the affection of those who believed honestly that in being loyal to me they would be disloyal to him. It is an old story, and most men in the ministry have had similar experiences.

The very first week of my pastorate I ran afoul the Ladies' Aid Society, which had staged a play to be given in the basement of the church. It particularly offended me because it was coarse in spots, and at the best in bad taste. One lady asked my opinion of it. I answered her truthfully, and before the day was over, the Ladies' Aid Society was militant—very.

If I had followed my impulse I would have resigned on the spot. While the storm blew over, it never quite subsided, for the ardent managers of that particular affair never forgave me.

This and similar matters were all trivial things, and my pastorate might have ended as most pastorates end, with a providential call to a larger field, had not other and more acute difficulties arisen.

The city in which that church was situated was like one of those retarded children which grow old, but never grow up; which is taken from one specialist to the other, with the ultimate verdict that the child ought to get a start and grow, but that it never will.

The place had all those advantages of which American cities love to boast. Five railroads, a splendid harbour and easy access to raw material. It boasted and boasted, yet its factories did not flourish, and its harbour attracted no fleet.

Its population was made up of shrewd Connecticut Yankees, reinforced by industrious, if not always God-fearing, Germans. Their sons and daughters intermarried; but the children born to them lacked vigour and spirit. The poor rarely rose above the level of the rich, who dwindled, died and were buried.

The occupation of the original settlers was fishing. Nothing in that business as it was there conducted should tend one way or the other to influence a city's character. The work was seldom dangerous, never picturesque. The stupid fish were caught in huge traps, fastened to stakes driven in the shallows. At certain times the nets were drawn up, the fish dropped into waiting barrels and boxes and hastily shipped to their various markets, as if

they were peaches or grapes, two other rich crops of that region.

Gradually a new business developed to which the whole city finally gave itself. It became ostensibly a summer resort, which before long was catering to the lowest passions of men and drawing revenue from all its deep and dirty channels.

Brothels conducted their business as openly as dry goods stores, and were in closest proximity to them. Gambling was not open, but common, and as the city brewed a famous beer and manufactured champagne and lesser brands of wine, the consumption of liquor was constantly encouraged.

The principal difficulty with the business of the summer resort was that it corrupted alike the natives and the strangers; for while those from the outside came for an occasional spree, we residents had the whole machinery of evil with us seven days a week.

Sons and daughters, husbands and even wives became its steady and remunerative patrons. The whole city was contaminated by it, for the enterprise was a stock company, and its stock was widely and wisely distributed.

I was told repeatedly that I might stay with my church to a good old age if I left the saloon alone. I was perfectly willing to do that, had the saloon

left me alone. Its mean, crafty, deadly influence was everywhere; not only in the drink it dispensed —that might have been the least of its brood of evils. It buttressed the brothel and spread poison, until its loathsome touch fell upon the mothers and the children. It corrupted the family, weakened legitimate business and even reached into the church, ready to throttle its spirit.

The cheapest, easiest and least effective method of fighting this entrenched power, which we called the saloon, for short, was to attack it from the pulpit; but having by that time learned something from experience, I avoided such a blunder, and the battle was begun in a very indirect way. I invited twenty men, representing various callings, to meet at my own home. They came, and we organized a literary society, which, I think, survives to this day.

It was the first time that the leading men of that city had come together for some idealistic purpose. My object was to create a feeling of unity and help develop in those men a healthy, civic spirit which at that time was entirely lacking.

Into the group came the editor of one of the daily newspapers, a man feared by every one for his incisive editorials and the bitterness and relentlessness of his attacks. He had a bulldog tenacity of purpose, yet with it a generosity and a geniality

of which few people knew, hidden and soured as were those qualities by the atmosphere in which he lived and worked.

After one of the meetings of the society I walked with him to his home and spoke to him about the things which burdened my heart, pressing upon him much of the responsibility for the city's pitiable plight.

We paced the street until one o'clock in the morning, and the next day the city was startled by a broadside editorial attack in that man's paper upon its business, its life and its spirit.

True to his nature, he continued the attack more bitterly each day until finally a small group of men, under his influence, gathered together and we began legal proceedings in which, although balked and hindered, we were finally victorious.

That is, we succeeded in separating our evils. The brothel and the saloon were compelled to part company, the worst and most openly offensive resorts were closed and outwardly, at least, we became decent.

I soon discovered that this paltry victory was gained at great cost. The barrel makers, the lumber dealers, the insurance men, even the dry goods merchants, the cigar makers, the grocers and the butchers all seemed to suffer because a dangerous business had been checked. Quite naturally the

minister too was affected and that in many a small and cruel way.

The fact that the church treasury became depleted did not worry me greatly; but that those whom I considered good friends turned against me, and their wives and children passed me coldly by, did hurt deeply.

One offence leads to another. One Sunday evening I preached to the crowds at the boat landing. Truth compels me to acknowledge that the setting was not highly ecclesiastical. A grocer's wagon was my pulpit, and a few zealous youths served as the choir, accompanied by a baby organ—rightly named, if judged by the sounds it emitted.

My congregation was the surging mob, waiting for the train on which to return home after its Sunday's pleasure. There I preached the Gospel, and that too gave cause for offence to many respectable sheep of my flock.

Another *faux pas* of which I was guilty was my attempt to maintain the spirit of fellowship among the workmen of the city by labouring with them.

One winter for a week I worked in every industry, except the brewery and the distillery. It was an exhilarating task, as well as an arduous one, for my softening muscle and flagging spirit. At six o'clock each morning, with my dinner basket which the "good wife" had packed for me, I went

to work. At night after a refreshing bath—and I realized how few workmen enjoy the luxury—I attended to my pastoral duties.

At noon I gathered the workmen together, and at our luncheon we talked things over. I did not always talk religion; I created, or tried to create among them a pride in their job, a dissatisfaction with doing the mere mechanical tasks and a desire to escape their "blind alley" occupations.

I succeeded in making an architect out of a mill-hand and a civil engineer out of a mule driver. I do not know that I saved any souls, but I saved some waste of bodies and minds. Perhaps the good Lord will give me credit for that, although my congregation did not.

I worked one week in a veritable hell, where acids ate the tissues of men and a foul dampness inflamed their muscles, so that they were consumed within five years if they stayed "on the job."

Only the toughest undertook it, men who felt they had nothing to lose and much to gain by an early death. When I came out of that pit I made the managers uncomfortable by telling my convictions about the place. It did not affect my health, but it did affect my hold upon my congregation.

Another factor which added to the storminess of that pastorate was that there the "Trail of the Im-

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migrant" began to lure me with a power which was difficult to resist.

The islands near the city were rich in limestone and were slowly being blasted away and ground into cement. The men who came to do the dirty and dangerous work were Slavs, those sullen, silent men with whom I feel a strange kinship. They were neglected and exploited, and I took one Sunday evening to talk about the Immigrant Problem—my first definite message upon that subject.

The next morning I was told by one of my trustees that I was "called to that church to preach the Gospel, not to talk about those dirty foreigners."

The immigrants were then coming in groups large enough to attract attention, and by the sheer force of numbers impressed themselves as a problem.

I spent my vacations following them through the steerage, Ellis Island, the mills and the mines; to Pittsburgh, Connellsburg and Chicago. The trail which once I took by stern compulsion, I followed from a desire to study those men, to rediscover within them the values they possessed and to call attention to the wrongs practised against them.

I began to write upon the subject, and each time a magazine with one of those articles reached cer-

tain members of my congregation I was made to feel that I had stolen time from my church.

Possibly they were right. Perhaps a minister ought to do nothing except preach the Gospel and build up his church; but to me the Gospel looked larger than the Book which contained it, and the church had no local boundary.

My wife and I had repeatedly discussed the situation, which was growing tense, and as one of our pet theories had been that we would never remain in a church if my ministry provoked opposition, I unhesitatingly and unqualifiedly resigned; although we faced an unknown to-morrow.

Our assets were: Each other, three children, aged, respectively, nine, five and one year, some debts—and faith in the Guiding Hand which hitherto had led us.

In December, 1902, we left our last parish, just four years after coming to it. In spite of its storms, we look back upon it with happy memories. We left behind us many friends and very few if any enemies.

One of my great comforts during times of discouragement while I was a pastor was the friendship of my brother ministers, which, I am glad to say, I never forfeited. If I ever felt the genuine force of Brotherhood at work, I felt it while a pastor, among those ministers of the Gospel, with

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whom I lived in close fraternal relationship for twelve years.

I have never met more manly men, truer friends, more splendid examples to follow in doing the hard tasks of my ministry than these pastors; and those who were the most sincere, the easiest to approach and the readiest to help, were those who had reached the greatest prominence and carried the heaviest burdens and responsibilities.

When I reached home after preaching that last sermon in my last parish—with a silk umbrella in my hands and tears in my eyes, we talked it all over in the quiet of the night, wondering whether it was worth while; yet determined to face the to-morrow with faith in the God who had never forsaken us.

A few years ago the Christmas mail brought me a small box securely wrapped and bearing the post-mark of the city of my last pastorate. Opening it I found a beautiful gold watch, sent me by the Negro business man who was one of my congregation when I preached that last sermon.

It is a wonderful watch! It not only keeps good time—it has a magic quality. Whenever I recall my last pastorate, with all its griefs, its disillusionments and disappointments, and wonder whether, after all, it was worth while . . . this watch, like Peter

Pan's Tinker Bell, ticks the answer: "Of course it was worth while. Of course it was worth while."

The umbrella I have forgotten—I always forget umbrellas; but the watch I keep and carry because every minute it says: "Of course it was worth while."

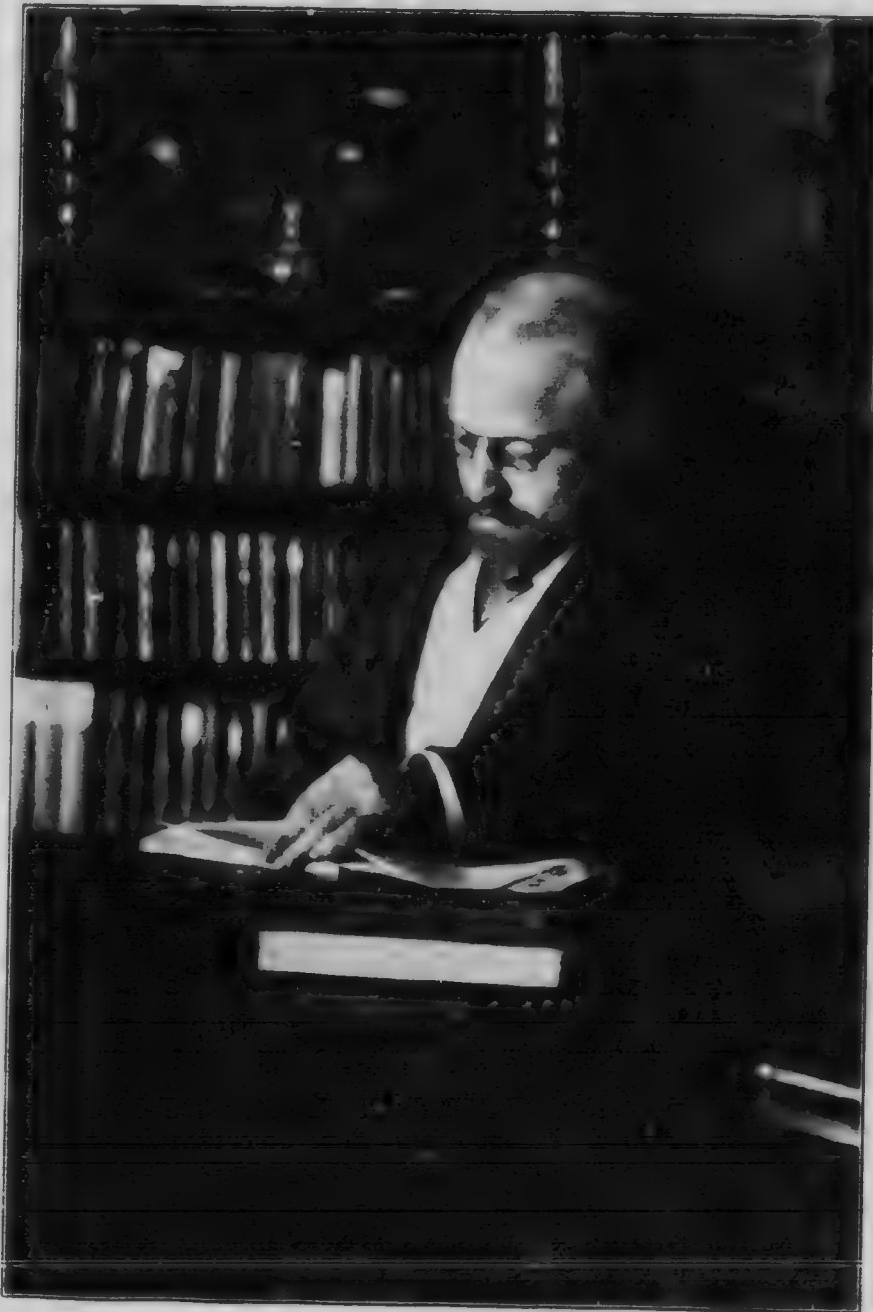
XXX

THE CHAIR OF APPLIED CHRISTIANITY

TO those of us who are involved in the practical problems of our age, it does not seem possible that there ever was a time when thinking men spent all their mental energy upon the subject of free will. Yet one's mind reverts to this unsettled question quite involuntarily, especially when he sees his life in retrospect.

Looking back upon my own, I realize that it was a planless one, or if it was planned I was compelled to live it almost as an involuntary agent, in the hands of fate or the good Providence or whatever we choose to call that force which "shapes our ends." Even the "rough hewing" was done by mightier hands than mine.

When we left our last parish, it seemed as if my own early plans were to be realized; for I was to continue my linguistic studies. A dear friend, the President of Oberlin College, had advised me to fit myself for a teaching position. He agreed with other of our friends that there were certain handicaps under which I laboured as a



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pastor, and that there were greater possibilities for my usefulness in teaching than in the ministry.

The execution of this plan was made possible by a commission from the editors of the *Outlook* to write a life of Tolstoy. They not only paid me a generous sum in advance; but treated me then, and have treated me since, with a courtesy and consideration which make my connection with that journal a constant pleasure.

On December 20, 1902, with my family I sailed for Europe. During the Easter recess I left the University of Berlin, where I was studying, went to St. Petersburg and from there to Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy's home, accompanied by Mr. Pasternak, the Russian artist, and his talented wife. We were to spend some time there; he in painting pictures for the book, and I in getting local atmosphere and the material, which was generously put at my disposal.

While there I received a letter which contained a call to the Chair of Applied Christianity in Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa. I declined the offer, which later I accepted in response to an urgent cable message. I had no technical preparation for the work, nor was I sure that I had a social message clearly enough defined to be acceptable in an academic atmosphere.

So again I dropped linguistics and turned to the

newer field of a practical application of the teachings of Jesus. After a delightful year of study I returned to this country to take up my work at Grinnell. There may have been doubts and questionings among the friends of the College and in the minds of the faculty when I was called to it for, besides being academically an unknown man taking a position which had gained justified prominence—I was untrained and untried in that field. However, if any one harboured misgivings, I was never made conscious of them.

A number of causes has contributed to the measure of success which I have attained in my department. The radicalism of my predecessor had, by the time I began my work, become more or less the accepted doctrine of the churches. At least no one was startled by the word social, as related to the teachings of Jesus. The seed sown by the pioneers had germinated well, and many churches were permeated by the social spirit of the Gospel.

I entered upon my work without bravado, yet unafraid; not cautiously, yet not carelessly; with a definite idea, but without dogmatism. I began teaching the glorious Christian doctrine of Brotherhood, my one aim being to send my students out rightly related to their God, their fellowmen and their duty.

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My students trace the growth of the brother idea from its uncertain beginnings to its clearer enunciation by Jesus, and they follow the deathless Christ Spirit in its work through the ages to this day.

I teach one religious doctrine with a scientific dogmatism, and one scientific doctrine with a religious zeal, namely: that underneath all the differences in races and classes, humanity is essentially one.

This I am well prepared to teach; because the one thing I do know is human material. I know intimately Slavs, Jews, Teutons, Latins, Africans, Asiatics; and know that they all possess the elements which make the true man.

The task begun by my department, that of awakening the churches to the great economic problems, has been done, and with all its difficulties and intricacies is in process of solution.

My great aim now is to teach intelligent and religious men and women how to look at the unlike to learn to like them, how to break through prejudice so that the emotions are not conquered by hate, how to be able to stand in this conglomerate of races and nationalities which flow into our nation and be able to say without cant: We the People. This path which I have marked out for

myself is not an easy one; yet my doctrines do not readily arouse great opposition, although they are most radical and revolutionary.

When I began teaching in Grinnell College I found in President Bradley a staunch friend. His successor, President Main, as well as the members of the faculty, have been most generous in their attitude toward me, and I have absolute academic freedom.

The greatest prominence has come to my department through my activities in the field of Immigration. Here again the planning was not to be mine. Instead of sitting quietly in my place as I had expected, instructing a delightful group of men and women—my chair suddenly began to revolve, and I have been carried from one end of the country to the other, investigating, teaching, lecturing and preaching.

The calls for my services have increased until my position is seriously threatened, and I owe to the generosity of the college authorities my ability to do this more general work while maintaining my place in the institution.

Into the discussion of the economic side of the immigration problem I have never entered exhaustively, nor have I loudly demanded a more liberal immigration policy. I have tried to humanize the process of admission to this country, to

expose and abolish the worst abuses of the steerage, and to interpret the quality and character of the new immigrant to those Americans who became hysterical from fear, and believed that these newer people were less than human.

I have stood between the immigrant and those who call him the "scum of the earth" and blame him for all our social ills, holding him responsible for every supposed evil to which society is heir.

I have also tried to shield him from those who would over-idealize him, seeing in every Greek a Homer, and in every w a Moses or a David. I know him to be just common clay, responsive to kind treatment, crushed sometimes out of human semblance, starved out of his right to full nurture; ignorant, often degraded, irresponsible, sometimes criminal, but a man still; and I have demanded, and still demand, a chance for him to prove his worth.

If I have been optimistic regarding the future it is because I know from actual experience that this newer immigrant is just as worthy as those who preceded him. I have shared his economic burdens for many years and have seen him lifting himself and his family to a new and higher level. I have watched him develop his downtrodden strength and his hidden talents. I have also sounded the note of warning, for I have known

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him to become more and more the victim of our industrial maladjustment, suffering anew from overstrain, accidents and occupational diseases. All this shows its effect upon a pinched and stunted second generation, that will not bear its ills with the Old World patience, but will clamour for the unpaid wage of its parents, which we shall have to pay in one way or the other, even to the uttermost farthing.

Moreover, from this second generation, there will come a rapidly growing demand for a right to labour without the enthrallment of the whole man, for a chance to live upon a scale in harmony with the wealth which the workers have helped to create; they will ask for this with the ballot and if they do not get it, will take it by brute force, and wreck and ruin that which they helped to establish.

Whether immigration is to be restricted more, or how it is to be restricted, is a serious question; but how to deal justly with those who are here is a much more fundamental problem and its solution brooks no delay.

I have insisted that to solve the problem we must approach it fraternally and not prejudicially. Upon the vast army of workers who free us from hard and dangerous toil we must look with the respect due their calling. The man who goes into the depths of the mine and exchanges his

day for night, that we may change the night into day; the man who faces the boiling caldron and draws ribbons of fire from the furnace for our safety and comfort; the man, the woman and the child who have bent their backs to stitch our clothes, have not only justified their existence but have made ours easier, more beautiful and safer. That they are Hungarians, Italians or Jews ought to make no difference, for after all they are human, and this problem of immigration is a human problem with far-reaching consequences.

I have been pleading with voice and pen and soul for an understanding and brotherly attitude toward the immigrant. I have been told by my critics that my own attitude is too interested for clear vision; that love makes blind. I do not refute that indictment. Love does make blind; but prejudice makes *both blind and deaf*,—unfortunately it never strikes a man *dumb*. Prejudice stops ears and closes eyes, but loosens the tongue in a most marvellous way.

Over and over again I have travelled the "Trail of the Immigrant," from shop to mill, from farm to mine and back again. I have retraced my steps to the villages and towns of the Old World, and have repeatedly gone over the self-same path which once I travelled from sheer necessity. I have joined my life to thousands and tens of thou-

sands of these strangers. I have helped to create groups of faithful workers and have endeavoured to fill them with the prime requisite for their task —an effective sympathy.

I have touched in the great throngs the men and women who voluntarily or perforce have become the neighbours of these aliens, and they have justified my faith. I have not yet heard an ill word spoken of them by those who know them best; their detractors always live at a distance.

We are told by a certain professor whose genius in generalizing is unquestioned, that we shall become a mongrel race and lose all those qualities which have made us virile, intelligent and resourceful.

Others tell us that we shall become a super race, inheriting the virtues of all these people who mingle with us; that we shall surpass every other nation in strength and talents.

I am frank to say that I do not know what will happen. The effects of intermarriage are imperfectly understood and we have no reliable data; but I am not a believer in the immutability of race. I stand between Chamberlain's *Rasse ist Alles*, and Finot's *Rasse ist Nichts*. My own observation has led me to believe that nothing serious happens when a child has in its veins a mixture of Latin and Saxon blood, and that Slavic and Semite mix-

tures, and others too, have produced normal children.

I have found that in the blending of races which is taking place between the older and the newer immigrant groups, the Irish are a dominant factor; for in every intermarriage between Irish and Italian, Irish and German, Irish and Jewish, their children show Irish characteristics.

In each case which has come under my observation, I recognized in the children of these mixed marriages, Irish features and temperament. I can say this with some degree of assurance, for my studies have carried me to all parts of the United States, and wherever there is intermarriage between different immigrant groups I have made accurate observations.

There are many marriages between Jews and Gentiles which are childless; it is difficult to tell whether this fact has a racial or merely a social or economic cause back of it. Where there are children there is no special accentuation of type, except that the Semitic invariably becomes recessive, which no doubt is due to psychological rather than physical reasons.

I have seen no abnormalities developed as a result of these mixtures, although I have seen individuals whose blood contained anywhere from two to fourteen so-called racial elements.

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While the generations which are to follow us are bound to be the result of various kinds of inter-marriage, my opinion is, that although they will be somewhat intensified, they will be an American type, in whose shaping, environment will play a larger part than inherited race qualities.

I have pointed out those specific forces which are making the immigrant both inwardly and outwardly an American, and which ultimately will assimilate him. Let me mention some of the environmental causes of his Americanization.

Climate, no doubt, is to be considered, and as this continent is so arranged that there are but few climatic pockets, and practically the whole of it is under the dominance of the same erratic weather changes,—it will work upon Slav, Latin and Semite precisely as it has worked upon Celt, German and Anglo-Saxon. Unless some permanent atmospheric change takes place, or some process is invented by which the ozone may be extracted from the air, or a trust be formed to exploit it, the climate may be counted a regular part of this proceeding.

The quality and quantity of food have something to do with it. As long as from ocean to ocean we eat bread made from the same flour and meat does not rise so much in price that it cannot be used daily; as long as prepared breakfast foods continue

to be persistently advertised, the factor of diet will remain a lasting one; although the inability to keep a proper balance between the higher cost of living and the lessened purchasing value of wages, may disturb this important element in assimilation.

Economic opportunity, as a whole, has had a very decided effect upon the immigrants, many of whom have here their first chance to obtain a margin, or surplus; new needs are created, a higher standard must be maintained, and a fresh, powerful stimulus is introduced into the life of the stranger.

Here exists the greatest danger of the retardation of the process; for whatever it be which tends to diminish this economic opportunity hinders Americanization.

The paying of a good wage, thus making it possible for the new-comer to rise to a higher plane of living, may be a greater patriotic duty than teaching men the obligations of citizenship, or providing for their recreation or even their education.

Outside these environmental influences which have worked more or less automatically, I have been pleading for a strengthening of the *Self-power* which I have found most active in shaping and reshaping, not only my own life, but the lives of

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others. The Spirit of Democracy, which basically is a supreme confidence in man.

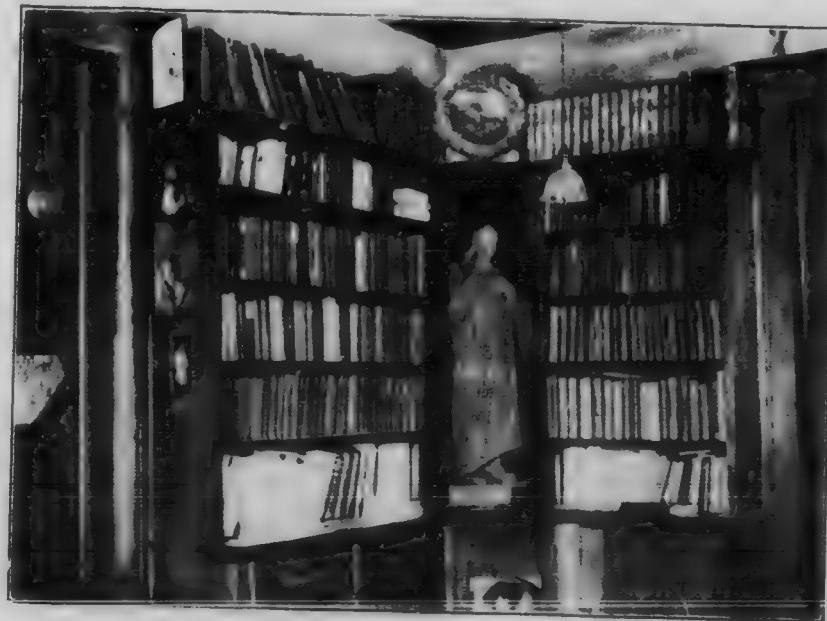
We who have come out of the Old World weariness, its pessimism and distrust, have received here a sort of general indulgence or pardon, as if God, through His High Priest, the people, had said: "I will blot out your transgressions." Here, indeed, we are not only pardoned; we receive a new birth, as miraculous as that which puzzled the inquiring Nicodemus.

That which separates the Old World from the New is not the Atlantic Ocean, but something broader and deeper—it is this sense of confidence in our fellowmen. As I recall my experiences and have those of others revealed to me, I seem to be living the life of a multitude. It is this which awes me and almost overcomes me. That here, without other tests, or proofs, or documents, than our own humanity, we are admitted to the country's privileges, to citizenship, to the "fellowship with the saints." I value this confidence so greatly that I have set my face against any and all of those tendencies which, in this age, seem so ready to disturb it.

I oppose Anti-Semitism and Anti-Catholicism, the Anti-Japanese agitation, or whatever ill feeling masses its hate and flings it upon all those who happen to be born of a certain faith or people.



A GLIMPSE INTO OUR DINING-ROOM



A VIEW OF THE STUDY



CHAIR OF APPLIED CHRISTIANITY 881

These antagonisms I have fought and shall fight with all the life and love I have to put into the battle.

My great hope is, that here the Christian Church will perform again the miracle she wrought in those virgin years; that of binding together Jew, Greek and Barbarian, bond and free. She can do it, if she regains her Founder's confidence in humanity.

Unfortunately the Church or churches still harbour historic quarrels and breed new dissensions; certainly they do not weaken age-old prejudices.

The Church must learn to interpret her quarrelling councils as well as her religious struggles and wars in the broad, twentieth century spirit. She is still in danger of confounding Judas with Judaism, the inquisition with Catholicism, and the barbarous iconoclasm of the seventeenth century with Protestantism.

I have never stood for any one kind of propaganda by which to disseminate her faith, but I firmly believe her one weapon must be a renewal of the Christ Spirit; for in that spirit alone, can she conquer.

I am still in the thick of my battle. It is a glory to fight against hate and gross injustice: against the Anti-American, Anti-Christian spirit of race and religious prejudice.

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If to-morrow my part in the battle ends, I shall thank God for the share I have had in it thus far, I shall thank God for the way He has led me into it; through hunger, homelessness and loneliness; the drudgery of work, the pangs of poverty and even the fires of affliction.

If I am to be kept in the struggle, then for each day of it new thanks; nor do I ask that the wind be tempered, the floods assuaged, or the fires cooled; just this one thing I ask: That I keep faith unto the end.

And when the end comes I shall say with my last breath, that which thrills my whole frame with an unearthly joy:

Thank God for the Christ,
Thank God for America,
Thank God for humanity.

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